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COVER STORY
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Smoking depicted in art

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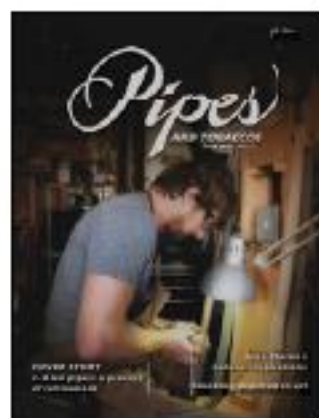


12

- 12** The compleat artisan
Pipemaker Jeff Gracik overcomes early adversity to accomplish mastery of his craft.
- 20** Yonder comes a miner
A pipe-smoking coal miner seeks work during the Great Depression.
- 22** Homecoming
Talented Danish pipemaker Karsten Tarp makes pipes full time, thanks to the help of some friends, both old and new.
- 26** Smoke-smokers-smoking
The art of smoking has been depicted in art for more than 400 years.
- 36** Soaring higher
Alex Florov turns an early interest in model aircraft into careers in industrial design and pipemaking.

REGULAR FEATURES

- 4 EDITOR'S DESK
- 6 PIPE LINES
- 44 PIPE STUFF
- 46 TRIAL BY FIRE
- 54 ADVERTISING INDEX
- 54 EVENTS
- 55 PRIME RETAILERS
- 56 PARTING SHOTS



ON THE COVER

Jeff Gracik working with a belt sander in his San Diego pipe studio. (Photo by Neill Archer Roan)

A man with glasses and a dark shirt is seated in a large, dark leather armchair, smoking a pipe. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. In the foreground, the hands of two other people are visible, one holding a pipe and the other holding a small red object. The background is dark and moody, with a large red pipe graphic on the left and smoke rising from the pipe the man is smoking.

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A nice Virginia/Perique blend

It was a typical Saturday. I'd been meandering through the house smoking a pipe and carrying a toolbox, trying to look like I was accomplishing something with door hinges or stair rails so my wife wouldn't give me a real assignment, like digging out the driveway's drainage pipe or doing battle with the Screaming Peruvian Poison-Spitting Spider population colonizing our crawlspace. Nobody can make abject laziness look as purposeful as I can.

My wife had finished scrubbing all the tile in the house with a toothbrush or disinfecting the insides of all the light bulbs or some such thing—I don't really pay attention to what women do for fun. She'd finally decided to take a nap, so I took a break from pretend activity and concentrated my full attention on indolence and sloth.

While reclining on the couch, smoking a nice Virginia/Perique blend, I uncharacteristically summoned the energy to shift my eyes and noticed what was happening outside the window. The wind was whipping the trees around and the sky was casting a sickly yellow-green light over the entire outdoors. I made a mental note to take down the deck umbrella if I found myself out there anytime soon.

Then hail the size of Dunhill group four bowls started pelting the window, and I became curious enough to reach for the remote control and turn on the local weather. Doppler radar indicated a line of thunderstorms 15 minutes from the house—thunderstorms that had already generated several tornados. *Drat*, I thought, *I'd better get my pipes downstairs in case the roof gets blown off.*

We have a coat closet in the hall that fits snugly under the stairs and acts as our storm cellar in emergencies. The crawl space under the house would probably be safer, but the Peruvian spiders down there have seniority and are not accommodating of visitors. I emptied the closet and then went upstairs to my office, where I gathered about half my pipes into a gym bag before remembering I also needed to save my tobacco. There was little time, but I got the pipes and three cases of aged tobacco into the closet with five minutes to spare and was feeling pretty good about the accomplishment when it occurred to me that I should probably wake my wife.

She was disoriented but sprang immediately from the bed when she heard me say, "Tornado coming in five minutes." "You get the dogs," she said. "I'll get the cats. Where's Kaitlyn?"

Kaitlyn is our 16-year-old daughter. She was at her boyfriend's house that day, a situation infinitely more worrisome than any storm. No immediate action could alleviate that and she was on her own.

So we huddled in that little closet in the dark while the storm raged outside—two humans, two big dogs, two angry cats, a bag of pipes and 45 pounds of tobacco. Then an eerie quiet descended and the storm seemed to have disappeared. I'd heard about this—the famed quiet before disaster. There was a flash of light and my wife jumped, but it was just my lighter. "You are not," she said, "smoking that pipe in here."

"What? Why not? This is my house, my closet, and I smoke where I like."

The storm picked up again but eventually passed without damaging our neighborhood. I know because I watched it from the front stoop, locked outside the house, smoking a nice Virginia/Perique blend.

Chuck

Pipes

AND TOBACCO

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all kinds and fine tobaccos

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P&T Readers RESPOND

Tribute to Belli

I would like to pay tribute to Alan Belli, who passed away Jan. 10, 2011. He was 68 years old. Alan was my mentor in experimental pipemaking, a retired tool and die maker who also taught industrial design. He enjoyed tying flies for fly fishing and constructing model airplanes. He is survived by his wife of 43 years and two sons.

Alan was a pioneer in the use of graphite bowls in pipes made of briar and other woods. He and I wrote an article about this exploration that was published in *P&T* Spring 2010. The first pipe that he lined with a graphite bowl was made in 1968, and he smoked that pipe since

that date. He told me not long ago, "The bowl looks and smokes the same as it did when I first made it!" His son asked [Alan] to make a similar pipe for him, and liked it so much that he encouraged Alan to make a collection of pipes with graphite bowl liners. Billy Taylor saw some of these on eBay and was curious, and Alan sent him a pipe. When I took up pipe smoking I ran across Billy's Web page about "The Pipe" and I wrote to him, and he put me in touch with Alan. Alan guided me remotely through the process of using graphite in pipes, initially providing pre-shaped graphite bowls and drilled blocks of wood from

which I carved several pipes that provided profound gustatory gratification. After a few pipes, my designs became more experimental, and difficult to construct, but these were drilled expertly and cheerfully no matter how far I pushed the envelope of convention. Alan's industrial design expertise surmounted any challenge. When I acquired more tools and adventurousness, Alan guided me with advice and sources for materials so that I could all by myself shape graphite rods into bowl and stem liners and fit them into wood.

I am thankful that *P&T* accepted our fanciful (and serious research!) article



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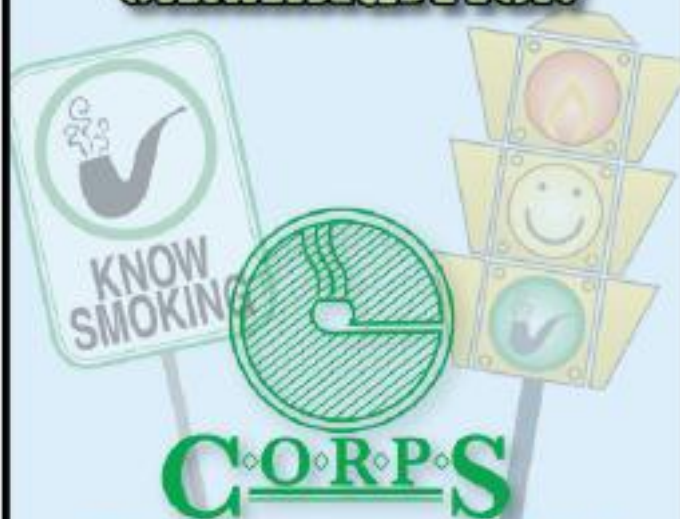
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about these experiments because the graphite-lined pipes smoke amazingly well, and I hope that someone else becomes inspired. With Alan gone, I may be the only one who makes pipes with graphite liners. My day job prevents me from making very many pipes (I've given a few to friends but never sold one). I would be happy to pass on what I've learned from Alan should anyone seek to embark upon a rewarding adventure that enhances the tobacco experience.

Alan and I traded pictures of pipes and thoughts about tobacco, and I think no better tribute to him could be made than to quote him here.

"I prefer a slow burning coarse cut tobacco, and have enjoyed St Bruno flake, Three Nuns, and Edgeworth sliced. I have not purchased any recently, so I don't know about their availability."

I think he had a big stash purchased long ago. Alan was a character, and I always got a kick out of the way he capitalized personal pronouns. Here is some of Alan's advice:

"Be careful when blowing into a graphite lined pipe since the plug of tobacco does not grip the sides of the bowl as well as briar does. The plug launch is accompanied by a puff of ash, and if the bowl is near empty, a spectacular shower of sparks! I hesitate to tell you how many times I have done this, usually while thinking about a task and unconsciously puffing away with careless abandon."

On one occasion I asked him about smoking inside his house, I think because I smoke outside and in Montana winters this can be challenging. He replied:

"I have been a cigar and pipe smoker for [more than] 50 years; and I have been married for 41 years to a wonderfully tolerant woman that puts up with My smoking (and a lot of other idiosyncrasies).

Everything has a stale smoke smell that others may notice, but as a smoker, I don't notice it until I return after I've been out of the house for several hours!

"We live in a very rural area surrounded by dairy farms and the Amish, and most people are used to the ambience created by the various animals as well as the copious use of wood burning for heat and the resultant smoky smells.

"I have always been a gregarious person, and have always welcomed anyone to My 'humble abode.' If they don't like My home, how it smells, or how they were treated, they may leave and need not return.

"I have been living in this location for 21 years and find that the 'locals' are friendly, and for the most part, accepting of us 'flatlanders' (as us non-native-born people are called).

"I guess that I am just becoming less tolerant, in My old age, of the judgmental nature that seems to have pervaded our society; but I do try to stay optimistic that things will improve."

On that last thought, I share Alan's hope that things will improve. He will be missed.

*Mark Grimes
Missoula, Montana*

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Facebook. Since May 2011, The Tobacco Pipe Artistry (a compound noun of *art* plus *history* that we coined) has been available at www.facebook.com/pages/The-Tobacco-Pipe-Artistry/101191206631918.

This site is wholly focused on the study and celebration of antique tobacco pipes in every medium from around the globe. Our objective is to create a singular, accessible "see-all—tell all" website to the public populated not only with myriad images of antique pipes, but also containing relevant textual information to illuminate everything that befits this subject: photos, videos, pertinent articles in open sources, auction news, a selective bibliography and related links. Additionally, there is a discussion forum for the exchange of information and ideas, in order to evolve a better, more universal understanding of these long-gone utensils of smoke, and to draw attention to the exceptionally skilled craftsmanship of thousands of unknown artisans who, for some 200 years, produced pipes in meerschaum, assorted woods, ivory, porcelain, clay and various metals. As well, pipes in other mediums, such as bone, steatite, catlinite, etc., from a much earlier era are exhibited.

We believe that The Tobacco Pipe Artistry serves as a very unique clearinghouse for all who seek an informed and expansive education: pipe collectors, pipe smokers, researchers, curators, art students, personal property appraisers, his-

torians and tobacco industry personnel. We acknowledge that The Tobacco Pipe Artistry is now and will always be a work in progress, but with the contributions of others, it can gradually metamorphose into one of the most entertaining, instructive and visually exciting venues on the Internet. Those who have something to say or show are encouraged to join as fans, participate and offer their views and news. We welcome one and all!

*Daniel M. Beck
Ben Rapaport
Cyberspace*

UPCA contest report

This year's United Pipe Clubs of America (UPCA) U.S. National Champion and Overall Champion is Mike "Doc" Garr. Doc is president of the Pocono Intermountain Pipe Enthusiasts (PIPE) in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. He has been competing nationally and internationally since 2002 and was the Northeast Regional Champion in 2007 and 2008 and the Southeast Regional Champion in 2009.

Manduela is this year's Women's Champion, repeating her win from 2010. She is well-known as a premier Danish pipe carver. Her pipes reflect her distinctive style and appreciation of clean lines.

The pipe for this year's contest was donated by Antoine Grenard of Chacom, St. Claude, France. The tobacco was

Dunhill Early Morning Pipe. All contestants were very complimentary of the pipe and tobacco, considering them some of the best used in the American competitions.

This year's contest consisted of 50 pipe smokers from the United States, Canada, Belgium, Great Britain, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland and France. Thirteen UPCA clubs were represented in the contest. These contests affirm the bonds of friendship among pipe smokers throughout the world.

*David Bull, UPCA
Cyberspace*

Marvelous Marcovitch

I really enjoyed Fred Hanna's Marcovitch article. I had not previously heard of Marcovitch Black & White, let alone smoked it, but prompted by the article, a friend has sent me a 2 oz. coin-twist tin, exactly like the one shown in the article. I could not resist smoking it and I can say that it is just plain delicious! It is so smooth and subtly sweet and the smoke has a very noticeable creaminess that I have not experienced from any other English-style Latakia blend. Marcovitch Black & White is now the standard to which I will compare all English-style Latakia blends.

*Anthony Macaluso
Egg Harbor City, New Jersey*

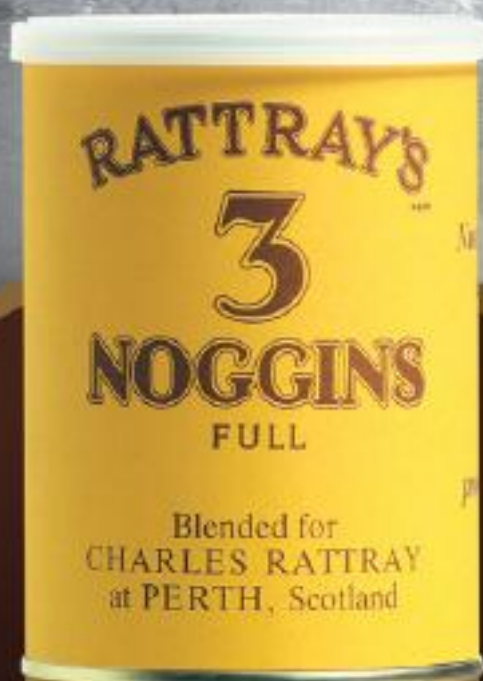
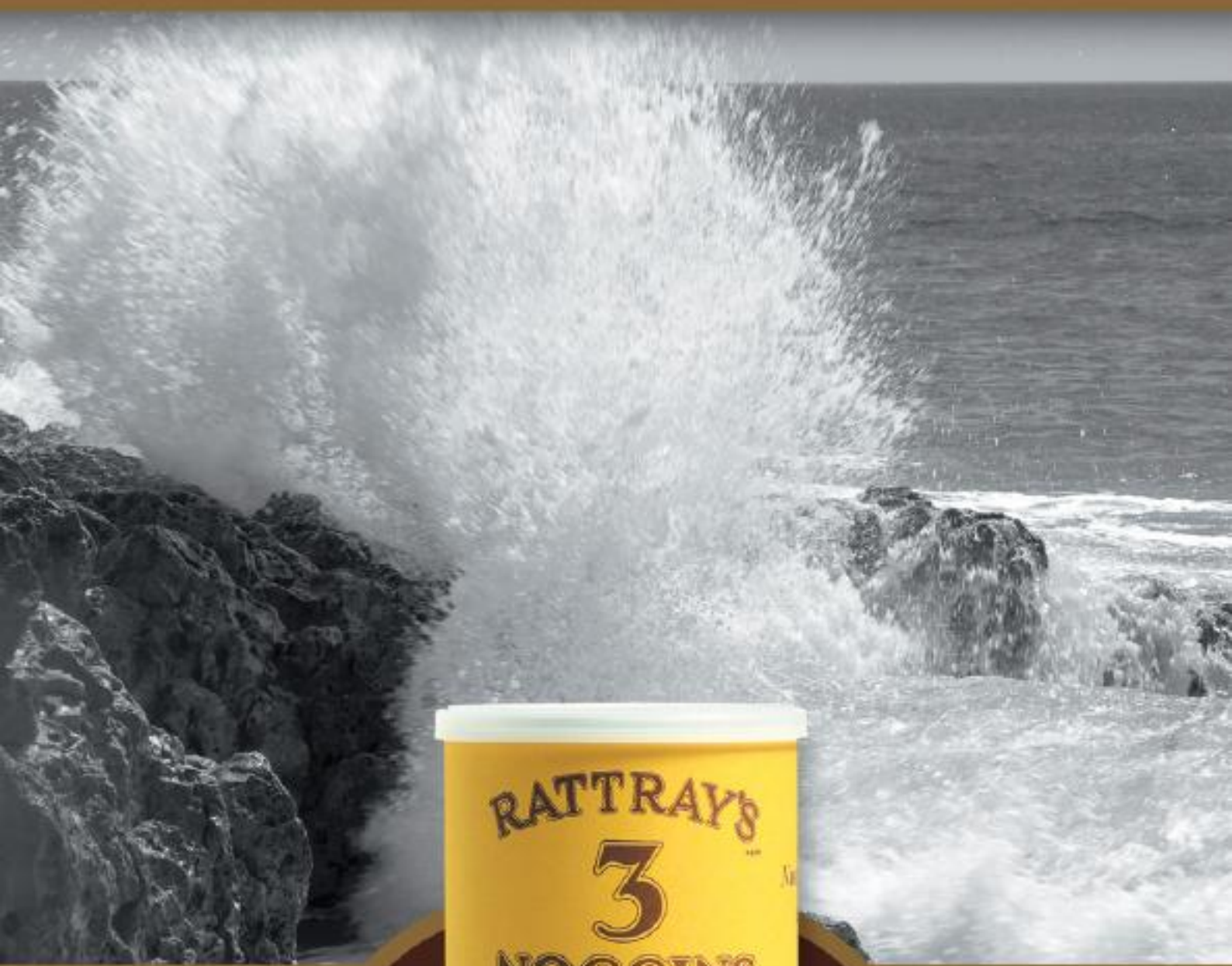
Doctor of Pipes Award recipients

We would like to join the Chicagoland International Pipe and Tobacciana Exposition in congratulating the two newest recipients of the respected Doctor of Pipes Award, conferred in May of this year to collector John H. Eells and to Paul E. Creasy of Altadis. Both gentlemen are enthusiasts with decades of participation in our fine hobby and well deserving of this recognition.

	Industry	Hobby
1998	Tom Dunn	Frank Buria
1999	Barry Levin	Basil Sullivan
2000	Chuck Levi	Ed Lehman
2001	Bob Hamlin	Rich Esserman
2002	Mary McNiel	Chuck Rio
2003	Peter Stokkebye	Limwood Hines
2004	R. David Field	Ben Rapaport
2005	Mike Butera	Rick Newcombe
2006	Marty Pulvers	Mike Reschke
2007	Tom McCranie	Frederico Baylaender
2008	Alberto Bonfiglioli	T. Gibb Robinson
2009	William John Ashton-Taylor	Fred Janusek
2010	Alan Schwartz	Fred Hanna
2011	Paul Creasy	John Eells

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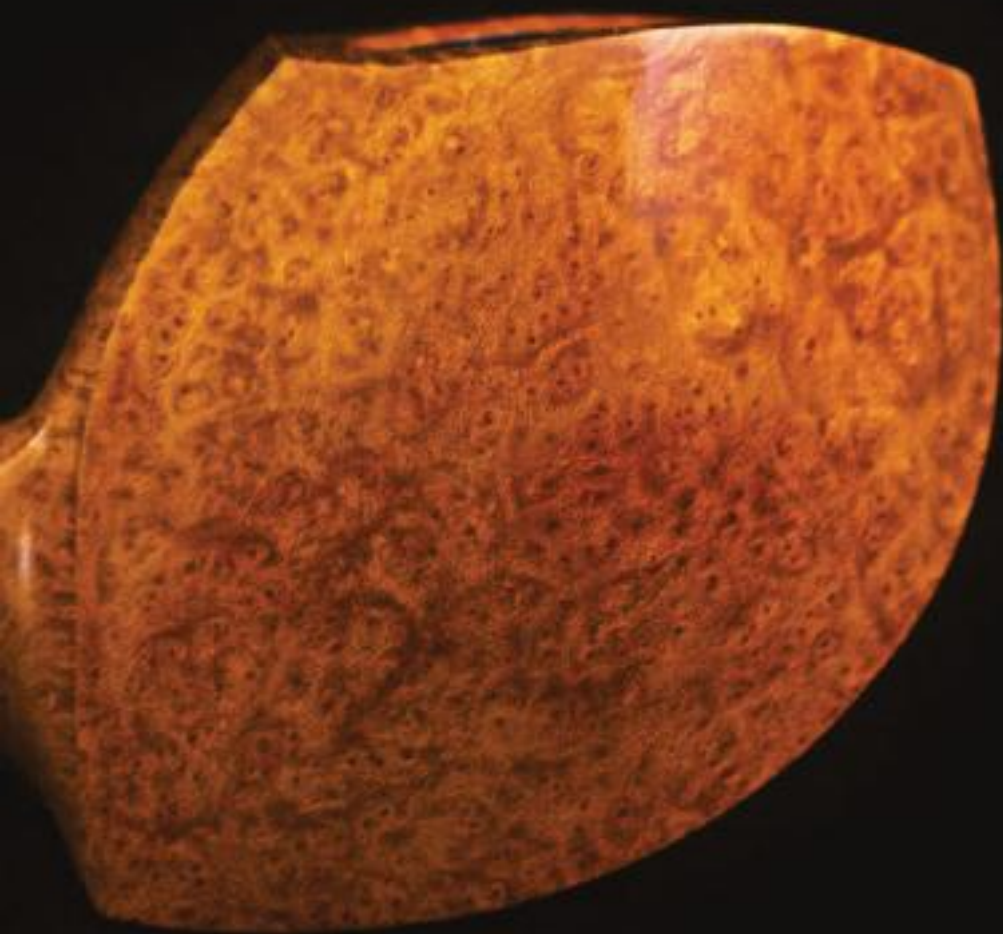
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The compleat artisan



Photos by Neill Archer Roan



I thought I knew Jeff Gracik. I met him when he was still in graduate school and just starting out as a pipemaker. I've bought pipes from him over the years, shared meals with him and watched his development. But nearly 12 hours together convinced me I was mistaken. Not only have experience and maturity wrought their expected changes, his beginnings were different than I had assumed. ►



Gracik's wicked skills have long been in evidence in his handcrafted J. Alan pipes. So has his intelligence. I expected that these traits would fuel growth, but I didn't expect transformation. I didn't expect to feel like I was talking to someone else, someone who had shed as much as he had added.

There is an apt word that describes what Gracik has become: *compleat*. Though *compleat* is a dusty, somewhat archaic word meaning "highly skilled and accomplished in all aspects," it fits Gracik as comfortably as his coffee-colored, canvas workshop apron.

When I interviewed Gracik three years ago he described himself as "screaming through the briar." He confessed that he was trying to find his voice in a world he didn't fully understand. "I had to very consciously tame myself."

Just a glance at Gracik's work three years ago revealed exuberant virtuosity. Adept hands, a keen eye and no little ambition combined to dazzling effect. Gracik was capable of making nearly anything he could imagine, but as a self-aware artisan, he also knew that he had to rein himself in and "speak in softer and different tones at a lower volume."

As I perused the pipes on Gracik's workbench, it was obvious that his efforts had borne fruit. His work remains

virtuosic, but the dimensions of that virtuosity are quieter and more self-assured. His work reflects restraint, suggesting that, where beauty is concerned, there's more where that came from. Here is an artisan who is no longer pushing limits; if limits are there, they are nowhere to be seen.

Clearly his skills have grown over the last several years, and he maintains a healthy awareness of that. "I'm less timid. I feel more confident. I'm no longer nervous or uncertain when I have to make choices."

If there is a crueler, more fickle medium than briar, it is hard to imagine what it might be. The most beautiful of blocks can reveal a constellation of pits and flaws when it is sawn, shaped or sanded, spoiling plans and frustrating choices. Gracik has a drawer half-full of beautifully shaped pipes he was forced to abandon.

Watching Gracik at the shaping wheel, trying to prevail over this uncooperative wood, underscores how quickly shaping choices have to be made with a wheel spinning at 1,500 revolutions per minute. In the past, briar's random acts of cruelty occasionally intimidated him. "When you put off your choices, it doesn't change what they are," he mused. "When I have a decision to make, I just make it."

At a time when so many other pipemakers seem to be ratcheting up the complexity of their compositions, Gracik increasingly pursues simplicity. His aesthetic orbits essence. His exploration of classicism in the design and crafting of pipes has shaped him, and while he still makes avant garde pipes, they, too, seem simpler and less self-conscious than they once were.

"When I started doing avant garde work, I didn't have that classical background. Now you can see the classical shape influence. I'm honing my design standards outside the classical form. Classical pipes are very influential, even in my avant garde work. I love making very classical pipes. I like to cut loose and make less classical pipes as well."

Gracik feels particularly blessed by the mentors he had. "When I first started, I was most influenced by Cornelius Mänz, then Jody Davis, Todd Johnson and Tonni Nielsen. Jody's classical work really influenced me."

"Todd was the first pipemaker with whom I worked. When I went and worked with Todd, I learned a lot of technical things. Stylistically, somewhat, I looked to Todd, but it was Tonni who was most influential early on in developing my eye."

"With Cornelius, I had a relationship through email and phone. He would



Yellow is applied following the darker stain to achieve a more dramatic contrast finish. The photos above are of the finished pipe. Gracik calls this shape the Leaf.

send me things and give me advice over the phone. His advice has remained quite influential. I think of him frequently."

Gracik's exploration of classics—particularly his belief that the Scandinavian school of pipemaking has resulted in an extension of the classical vocabulary—has shifted whom he now names as his principal influences: Lars Ivarsson, Jess Chonowitsch, Ulf Noltensmeier, Per Hansen and Bo Nordh.

"When I hold a Bo Nordh, I'm introduced to a new way to approach the same shape. Bo did it one way. Cornelius does it one way. Bang does it another way. Each has a unique approach to the same shape—the same basic idea.

"To study these things is to find out what gives a pipe its unique spirit. It invites me to examine my own work and ask, 'What is the spirit of my own work? What do I want to change? What do I want to adopt? Which ideas do I wish to incorporate? How will that shift the way that I shift or interpret a shape?'"

"If there's an effect that someone achieves—and I'm intrigued by that—I want to figure out how they achieve that. Sometimes, an effect can be created by the single swipe of a file."

While Gracik has been blessed by working with some great artisan-mentors, there's another group that has

significantly stimulated his development: those pipe collectors for whom he creates his work.

"There are some who are really interested in my interpretations of classic work—whether we're talking Lars or Dunhill. They are interested in my interpretation of things other people have done. There are others," Gracik explains, "who are interested in what I create. They say, 'I love your eye. I love your hands. Make me something.'"

"These two kinds of collectors illustrate the two extremes of influential collectors—those who invite me to explore new territory, and those who invite me to go over well-worn ground. Both are extremely valuable. Exploring new things? That's how new shapes are made. The most beautiful art came into being because someone said, 'Make me something new.'"

"Making something new is a unique challenge—especially for connoisseurs. People who spend a thousand dollars for a pipe are connoisseurs. They know what it is. That is a challenge for me because I know it is something that will be seen and appreciated."

Friend, collector and author of *In Search of Pipe Dreams*, Rick Newcombe has tried to help Gracik by periodically loaning him pipes for study. "Don't try

to reinvent the wheel. Don't be crazy for crazy's sake," Newcombe told him.

"When Jeff looked at my collection," Newcombe said, "he could see a great many variations on the classical shapes. That's what I have encouraged him to do. When he asked, my big advice to Gracik was to create his own interpretation of masterpiece pipe shapes. He's taken that advice and created his own Swedish Tomato."

As someone who has bought a number of Gracik's pipes for my own collection, I particularly appreciate their marriage of form and function. They are beautiful, but they are also pipes that my hand loves. They are practical. Practicality even came into consideration when Gracik decided upon the name he would use to brand his pipes: J. Alan.

"I thought 'Gracik' would be hard to pronounce as a product name," he said. "So, I went with my first initial and middle name—J. Alan. Of course, this was before I'd heard of Jess Chonowitsch or Hiroyuki Tokutomi!"

Gracik strongly believes in studying the work of the great makers, legends like Lars Ivarsson, Jess Chonowitsch and Bo Nordh. "Reinterpreting the old means being able to reinterpret that which has been done. You can't make something new if you don't know what is old. You

can't break the rules if you don't know what the rules are.

"Deviating from a pattern with flexibility to express myself is important. At the end of the day, one looks at a pipe and says, 'That's a billiard or a Dublin or whatever.'"

Collector Brad McCluskey was attracted to Gracik's work because of its aesthetic diversity and precision. McCluskey has added a half-dozen J. Alan pipes to his collection since he was introduced to Gracik's work last May at the Chicago Show.

"Not only does Jeff have an eye for the European Danish work," McCluskey opined, "but he also has an eye for the classics—billiards, apples, Canadians—your classic, tried-and-true shapes."

"Most of Jeff's pipes are a bit smaller," said McCluskey. "I like bigger pipes. I saw his classics and thought, 'If he can make them grow, that would be great!'"

As one of relatively few North American artisans who command more than \$2,500 for his highest-grade pipes (the Wave grade), Gracik has crossed the chasm from up-and-comer to someone taken seriously by both peers and collectors alike. At 32 years old, he is hardly old guard, but with eight years of pipemaking under his belt, he's no newbie, either.

"He's become one of the greats in a very short period of time," observed Newcombe.

Although Gracik is self-effacing and easygoing, he also radiates the confidence that a large backlog of orders confers. He currently makes about 100 pipes per year.

"It used to be I got an order for every pipe I made," said Gracik. "Now I get two to three orders for every pipe I publish on my website. It's liberating because I have the freedom to be confident artistically,"

he observed. "When you're a starving artist, you don't have a choice between 'Will I make something the market will accept?' or 'Will I make something that is artistically challenging?'"

"Do you ever worry that you might be the flavor of the month?" I inquired. "That your popularity might wane when the next big thing comes along? There are a lot of very talented young artisans out there."

"Sure," Gracik replied. "The market is fragile. You can soar one minute and run into a tree the next. You can't control the market. I think that the abundance of new and talented makers is great for pipemakers too, if you're up to the challenge, because what they're doing is challenging you as an established pipemaker to do even more—to explore new territory, to do your work better."

Gracik walks his talk. It was only a few years ago that he was a protégé. Now, a steady stream of new pipemakers seeks him out, asking if they can visit, observe and learn from him. It is a rare week that he works alone.

Ernie Markle, a notable new Arizona pipemaker, is one such example. Last May, Rad Davis introduced Markle to me as a promising young pipemaker in the Chicago pipemaker's seminar. A few months later Markle was added to the Smokingpipes.com roster. Markle has come a very long way very quickly.

"Clearly, if I were worried about the new guys, I wouldn't invite guys like Ernie into my shop. I'm proud of him. If Ernie threatens my business, it's not Ernie's fault. He makes good pipes. If I'm going to compete, I must make better pipes—every day better than the one before."

In the nearly 12 hours we spent together, Gracik repeatedly expressed how grateful he is for his life as an artisan. "I do

something I love and actually support my family. What a great blessing that is—to do what you love and make a life out of it.

"Honestly, it's scary to me—how much fell into place. That hasn't been the case for many people. In my case, it was just dumb luck. I made some good choices, but it feels like a lot of dumb luck to me."

To many people in the pipe community, Gracik's persona is that of a golden boy. He's articulate, athletic and poised. As a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary, he is as comfortable discussing philosophy, psychology and art as he is pipes or surfing.

Gracik and his equally accomplished wife, Melissa Burt-Gracik, have two beautiful young children whom they are raising in their hilltop home near San Diego's Balboa Park. By all appearances, he and Melissa live an idyllic life with few more serious inconveniences than the occasional dirty diaper. Appearances don't do their story justice.

After graduating from Greenville College with a degree in religion and psychology, Gracik worked briefly in corporate sales for a large textile company. He hated the work. "That experience told me I never wanted to work for someone else ever again hawking something I didn't care about."

Gracik fell in love with pipemaking when he was a graduate student at Princeton Theological Seminary. He and Melissa had been married a couple of years. Melissa worked as a nanny to help put food on the table.

"At the time, I was working with a crappy, wobbly drill press that I used for multiple things. I used it for drilling holes. I'd lay it down on its side and use it as a sanding motor. All those machines



in my shop? I used to do all that with one drill press—my chamber drill, my buffing wheel, my sanding disk and my wax applicator—it was everything. My entire shop was that drill press, in terms of machinery.”

When Gracik went to buy that drill press, he pretended to be a business so he could get a discount. “I lied,” he admitted sheepishly. “I needed to get it cheap.”

“We didn’t have two pennies to scratch together,” Gracik recalled. “Making a trip up to Yale to visit Todd [Johnson] was a big deal. It was a lot of money in gas.”

“When I came back, I told Melissa I thought I could be very good at pipemaking, but I needed to borrow money from our limited food and rent funds to buy a lathe. I thought I could pay it back by the time we would need it. She had faith in me. She’d spent hours and hours looking at my work and had been my partner. She saw me neglecting my studies so I could look at pipes and read the pipemakers’ forum. She saw what I was doing and what I was capable of. She said yeah, I could do it if I paid it back at a certain time. Thank God I was able to pay the money back on time.”

Soft-spoken, calm and thoughtful, Melissa possesses a buttery laugh. “I was

his venture capitalist investor,” she proudly asserted, “albeit with very limited funds.”

Gracik began his pipemaking enterprise in the basement of an apartment building owned by the seminary. After about six months, when he and Melissa were two days from leaving for a summer internship in the Dominican Republic, he was kicked out of his basement shop. “The guy said, ‘You can’t do this. This is a seminary, not a workshop!’”

Through a friendship Gracik had developed with a maintenance person, he was told about an unused storage trailer where he could safely store his equipment and tools.

“It was a total godsend,” said Gracik, “but here’s the kicker. I got an email about three weeks before we were returning to the country that told me that the school was getting rid of the trailer before I got back. It was from the very same guy who had kicked me out of my basement shop. We were terrified. I would have lost the few tools I had. I would have lost my entire pipemaking investment. Thank goodness I was able to push it back to two days after I got back.”

When Gracik returned from his Dominican Republic internship, he had just two days to find a new shop and move

all his equipment out of the storage trailer.

“I had a conversation with a friend of a friend who was a property manager at an apartment complex. He had a garage for rent, so I moved in there.”

“That garage,” Melissa recalled, “was far from our apartment. I would take him in the early morning. He’d have water and food. I’d come around noon and bring him lunch. Then I’d bring him dinner. Then I’d pick him up late at night. There was no bathroom there, so I’d take him to the grocery store down the road so he could go to the bathroom. It was absolutely inhumane. In the winter, there was no heat.”

“After Chicago that year, the guy who rented my first garage shop to me asked how I’d done. I told him I’d done well. Then he tried to extort money from me. I found out later that he wasn’t legally renting the space to me. He was just pocketing the money.”

Gracik found himself moving yet again to another garage. “A friend rented a house just down the street. It had a garage, and I rented it for the last year I was there.”

As happy as he was to be able to set up in the garage shop, there were still challenges. “I ran my whole shop on just one electrical outlet. Unfortunately, the

“I think that the abundance of new and talented makers is great for pipemakers too, if you’re up to the challenge, because what they’re doing is challenging you as an established pipemaker to do even more—to explore new territory, to do your work better.”



Nautical Dublin



Dancing Dublin



circuit breaker was in the basement of the house. I was working 18 hours a day getting ready for Chicago. Imagine. I'm working at 3 a.m.—knowing my next three months' income depends on the work I'm doing in the next couple of days—and I'd turn too many things on at once. The circuit blew. I knew it was lights out. There was no way I could walk through his house at 3 a.m. to go down to the basement to reset the breaker. I was working frantically to finish it all up. So I'd go home and get up really early to get there at the same time my friend gets up to reset the breaker."

That winter, Steve Morrisette came to

visit. "He was the first pipemaker to ever visit me," Gracik said. "It was so cold he couldn't work there. We had to buy plastic drop cloths so we could shroud the space so that it would hold the heat from the one electrical heater I had."

"I have always had these schemes to save money," Gracik admitted, "but they rarely work out. For example, I bought a lathe on eBay one time. I had it shipped to me and it got destroyed in shipment. They offered me \$25 because they paid per pound. That was going to break us, so I bought another lathe, and this time I borrowed an old farm truck with no radio and no air-conditioning from a

church-member friend.

"I drove all the way from Princeton to Norfolk, Va., and back in this truck that got 4 miles per gallon. I ended up spending more than I intended."

"It was a noisy and scary ride home. I would have felt so much more comfortable with a radio to drown out all those creaking sounds. I knew it wasn't my truck, and I knew that if there was a problem, I would lose both the truck and the lathe. I could afford to lose neither."

"I never thought about the fact that they loaded the lathe into the truck with a forklift. Obviously, I didn't have one at my shop. So I asked some friends if they

Danish Zulu



Swedish Tomato



"If there was any thread holding it all together, it was a shoestring."

would help me move the lathe. I didn't tell them how big it was. They looked at it and said, 'My God!' It weighed like 800 pounds. It was huge. One of my friends threw his back out helping me. I have amazing friends."

Reflecting on the differences between the myth and reality of Gracik's ascent into the world's top tier of pipemakers, I marveled at how successfully he had projected such a polished, no-problems persona. "I wish you'd told me some of these stories when they were happening, Jeff," I blurted. "I had absolutely no idea you'd struggled at all—you know, the whole Princeton, silver-spoon thing was how I saw you."

"I've never told anyone these stories. I can't believe I've never told anyone," Gracik responded. "I just tried to present a good image. I didn't want people to know about all this because they wouldn't think I was high-class or high-grade enough. I believed that I couldn't show weakness because that doesn't fit into the image I'm trying to promote."

"I've tried to put all this out of my mind," Gracik declared. "I said to myself, 'I can't sell high-grade pipes out of these places.' One thing is for certain. The location of manufacture has little to do with what can be made there. That's for sure."

"The Princeton pedigree? I think it paints an inaccurate picture. I'm from a small town in Pennsylvania. My dad worked in insurance, and my mom was a teacher. My dad was not passionate about what he did. I couldn't do that to myself, but I'm grateful that my dad did because it paid for my college. That



I don't have to work at something I don't care about is wonderful."

"Once my folks got my brother and me through school, they quit their jobs, sold everything and moved to Asia to do nonprofit work. I had good examples in them of people who know how to prioritize and also to pursue passion. In doing so they taught me that we all have to make choices. Sometimes the best choice is the selfless one."

"Has it ever been hard, Melissa? Has it ever been scary that Jeff abandoned what his education prepared him for to be a pipemaker?" I inquired.

"There's the fear of having to provide for the family—to make ends meet," she answered. "We're rich in life, but we've been poor by American standards. Any crack in that edifice feels scary. I think that's part of it. We've made baby steps along the way. It never felt huge. Jeff has always been able to figure things out."

"We have a great deal of empathy for people in our income bracket or lower. We don't take it lightly when people buy. That's why Jeff is very persnickety about his quality standards," Melissa explained.

"When Jeff cracks open a great block with wonderful grain, he shows it to me. He also shows it to me when a flaw shows up and the block can't be used."

"If he can't make a living at this, then he's not going to do it. It's not just for fun. This is his job to provide for his family. We're so thankful that Jeff gets to express his artistic talent. How many people get paid for their art these days?"

"If there was any thread holding it all together," Gracik said, "it was a shoestring. It's always been done on a shoestring until maybe the last year. So, when I say I'm grateful to the pipe community, it's because they've given me the life I have. I will continue to be grateful." P&T

Long-shanked Tomato



J. Alan pipes are available at:
United States: Smokingpipes.com and
www.jalanpipes.com
Europe: Scandpipes.com and
Bisgaard-pipes.com
Russia: Pipeshop.ru
China: hspipeclub.taobao.com

Yonder comes a miner

It was raining—a November, Kentucky rain that threatened snow—not heavy, but steady, and the layer of cinders on the road was mixing in the mud underneath. He slogged on through it, water squishing in and out of his boots with each step, finally reaching the wooden steps that led up to the general store. Opening the door, bell jingling, he paused to let his eyes adjust to the dim light inside. The proprietor was standing behind a long wooden counter sipping from a steaming cup.

"Hot or cold, friend? Hot's free. Cold will cost a nickel."

"Hot in any case," he replied, moving to the counter.

The proprietor reached to the side, picked up a metal cup and poured coffee from a pot resting on a small gas ring behind the counter. He handed it over with a question.

"Looking for work, mister ...?"

"John ... folks call me John."

"Big John, I spect, from the size of you."

"Sometimes." He took a sip. Hot and strong. "Good coffee. Thanks."

"Welcome." He eyed John up and down. "They was hiring up at the mine till a couple day ago. Don' know 'bout now. Hungry?"

John nodded.

"Some pickled eggs and crackers at the end of the counter. Don't eat 'em all."

He squished to the end of the counter, fished out two eggs with tongs and put them on a paper napkin with a half dozen crackers. There was a small table and chairs near a pot-bellied stove and he carried the eggs there before retrieving his coffee. He sat, unlaced

his shoes and set them to steam near the stove. The eggs didn't last long but he took his time with the crackers, savoring the salty taste.

The proprietor came over with the coffee pot and poured. "Coal bring ya to Harlan?"

"Yep."

"Traveled far from the looks of ya. Where's your kin?"

"Anjean, West Virginia."

"Worked for Leckie Coal, huh?"

"Till two month ago. What day is this?"

"Friday ... Friday the 13th to be exact. November 1931."

"I left Anjean the 6th. Been thumbin' and walkin' ever since. I thank you for the eggs. Ain't had nothin' since yest-day mornin'."

"Don't mention it. Got about 30 hens out back. Gotta do somethin' with the eggs. I boils up a bunch every day."

"What's your name?"

"Boats ... they call me Boats. Navy, back in the big war."

John fished a bent stem pipe from his jacket pocket and felt around for tobacco before remembering he'd smoked his last about noon. "Got any tobacco here, Boats?"

"What ya smoke?"

"Velvet mostly but PA will do."

"I got Velvet." Boats walked behind the counter and took a flip-top pocket tin from a small rack of tobaccos. John, still in his stocking feet, walked to the counter.

"How much?"

"Thirteen cents."

John fished in his overalls pocket and laid some change on the counter—66 cents.

"That all you got?"

"Got a dollar in my wallet. Left Anjean with seven."

"Well ... pay me when you get work."

"Nah, better not. Might not be nothin' for me."

Boats took 13 cents from the change and put it in the register. John broke the seal on the tin, took a small pinch of tobacco and put it in his cheek before filling and lighting his pipe. The bell rang at the door and two young fellows walked in soaked to the skin. They paused, letting their eyes adjust to the light, and looked around the store before coming to the counter.

"Coffee?" asked Boats.

"Yeah, coffee. How much?" Neither could have been much over 20 years old, and the one who spoke was the taller of the two and had several days' growth of beard.

"Five cents," said Boats with a wink at John as he poured, "And that's with a refill."

The taller one put a dime on the counter, picked up his cup and walked to the stove with the shorter one in tow.

"Whose stinking shoes are these?"

"Mine," said John quietly. "I'll move 'em." He walked over to the stove, picked up his boots and leaned against the counter while he put them on.

"Hey old man, they still hiring up at the mine?"

"You talkin' to me?" asked Boats.

"Yeah. How far to the mine?"

"Road out front leads there. 'Bout a mile uphill on the mountain. Don't know if they's still hirin'."

The tall one stood up. "Come on, Charlie. We better get goin' if we're ta



get a job." He looked at John. "You a miner? Lookin' for work?"

"Could be."

"Well, ya better hustle up there with us. Might be only a few jobs."

"Think I'll wait a spell. Dry out a little."

"Suit yerself. You look plum tuckered. Probly won't get hired anyway."

"Could be."

After they left, John walked to the door, leaned against the sill puffing on his pipe, and watched the two of them half run, half walk up the hill toward the mine. As they gradually faded from sight in the mist, he took a few more puffs on his pipe and walked to the stove to tap it out on the wooden edge of the sandbox before putting it in his pocket.

"I 'spect I'll walk on up there and see what goes."

"Good luck," said Boats. "Straw boss' name is Monk. Tell 'im I said hello. Might help."

"Thanks ... and thanks for the coffee."

The rain had tapered to a drizzle

with a few snowflakes mixed in. He pulled his collar tight and started up the road to the mine with an easy gait that had carried him across most of two states. Within 10 minutes he was more than halfway to the mine and spotted the two fellows coming back down the hill. They were almost even with him when the tall one said, "No sense going up there. They ain't hirin'. May as well turn back."

When John didn't reply, the tall one said, "You hear me? They ain't hirin'. You'd be goin' up there for nothin'."

Without breaking his stride, John said, "Could be," and kept walking. When he got to the mine, several miners were standing around a fire-box warming themselves and waiting for shift change. One of them, a barrel-chested man of medium build, was leaning against a shortwall coal cutter. He'd been watching John walk up the hill. He straightened and said, "I'm Monk. Straw boss here. What do you do?"

"Anythin' down under."

"When can you start?"

"Now."

"We'll go to the mine shack and sign you up."

John pulled his pipe from his pocket and filled it from the tin of Velvet. "Can I ask you something?"

"Ask away."

"Why is it you turned away those other two fellows and are hirin' me?"

Monk smiled. "I was talkin' to those two when I saw you comin' up the mountain, walkin' like you could pace yourself that way forever, and I said to the boys here, 'Yonder comes a miner, boys ... Yonder comes a miner.'" P&T

"Yonder Comes a Miner" first appeared in a collection of short stories titled *Then... Now... Whenever...*, copyright 2003 by Regis McCafferty.

Homecoming

Karsten Tarp becomes a full-time pipemaker, thanks to the help of an old friend

If you're an American pipe smoker, there's a good chance you might not have heard Karsten Tarp's name before. A pipemaker for almost 40 years, Tarp is one of the best-kept secrets of European pipemakers. Part of his relative anonymity stems from Tarp's own somewhat shy and humble demeanor. The 57-year-old Dane is clearly uncomfortable talking about himself. Yet, the biggest

factor in Tarp's obscurity has been that very few of his pipes have found their way to the United States, with almost all of his pipes being gobbled up by European and Japanese, and now Chinese, smokers and collectors. However, Americans can now become familiar with the quality and fine craftsmanship of Tarp's work, thanks to one of Tarp's old friends and colleagues, Kai Nielsen.

Like many young men, Tarp had little idea what career he wanted to pursue when he graduated from school, but he took a job at the Bari factory in Kolding, Denmark. Working alongside Viggo, Kai and Jørgen Nielsen, Tarp studied the craft of pipemaking and, though he didn't know it at the time, found his calling.

"There's always been a carpenter or woodworker in my family, so it sort of runs in the family," Tarp explains. "When I started with Bari, pipemaking caught me. I fell in love with the briar and what sort of shapes I could get from it."

After spending several years learning pipemaking at Bari, Tarp left the company and established his own pipemaking shop. However, he found it hard to be a full-time pipemaker on his own, and he sometimes had to take on other jobs to make ends meet. He tried his hand in several different fields—including as a goldsmith and working the freezer inside a meat-processing plant—but none of these occupations captured his imagination or made him eager to get out of bed every morning and head to work. Still, he was able to make pipes under his own name, and he also crafted pipes for sale in the Dan catalog.



Karsten Tarp and Dolph

He then took a job working for a Danish furniture company. While he spent most of his time crafting furniture, he was also given the opportunity to make pipes. The job also allowed him to tour Europe, especially Germany, which was the company's largest market, where he put on exhibitions at shops with other artisans employed by the company. By touring Germany, Tarp established relationships with pipe smokers, which grew the demand for his pipes, and Tarp began considering establishing his own full-time pipe studio once again. Sadly, events in his life delayed his plans.

"My girlfriend was manic-depressive and she drove her car into the harbor, killing herself," Tarp explains. "I went into a period of crisis."

Then old friend Kai Nielsen approached Tarp. Nielsen offered Tarp a place to stay, food to eat and a corner of his workshop in which he could move on from his loss and concentrate on becoming a full-time pipemaker once again. Tarp accepted and moved to Faaborg, where Nielsen had moved several years before and established a workshop. Once he had arrived in Faaborg, Tarp established close bonds with Nielsen and other pipemakers in the area.

"I have met a lot of pipe people since moving to Faaborg," Tarp explains. "I didn't meet very many pipe people before. I had no contact with other pipemakers for 10 years while touring Germany. It's a funny thing to be able to talk to other pipemakers. I have gained a lot of contacts too, so it's been a positive. Now it's beginning to be a career. It's not always been that. It's been hard work."

One of those contacts that Tarp has made is with Steve Monjure, who distributes Kai Nielsen's pipes in the U.S. Nielsen told Monjure of his old friend Tarp and described his work. Monjure asked Tarp to send him a few pipes and, once seeing Tarp's work, quickly agreed to distribute Tarp's pipes as well.

"When I received the first shipment of Karsten's pipes I realized that what Kai and Jørgen Nielsen said



Elephant Trunk

about his incredible skills as a pipe-maker was true," Monjure explains. "I kept a bulldog for myself. I was so impressed by the design and smoking qualities of his pipes. Karsten is a true artist."

Often with his black Labrador, Dolph, observing from nearby, Tarp crafts between 100 and 150 pipes a year now, with his production going to the U.S., Germany, Russia and China. Tarp jokes that he would like to demand enough money from his pipes so that he would only have to make 100 pipes a year, but then he comments that 150 is the right number—both financially and creatively.

"Working for myself gives me the chance to work when I feel for it and not when I have to do it," Tarp explains. "I have complete freedom, which helps my creativity. If I'm forced to do things, then the outcome is not always so pretty. In the past, when I was forced into making a pipe, I fell back into old and boring shapes because the creative ideas weren't coming. That meant that I made ordinary pipes. I can see it when I look at some of my old pipes. There were periods when I was forced to make pipes because I needed the money, and the pipes I made during those periods weren't



so good. And then I can tell when I made a pipe during a good period. They really make me say 'Wow, the shape is really coming along.' And they make me excited to be a pipemaker."

Working at Bari pipes and with the furniture company that allowed him to make pipes, Tarp typically made classic shapes with very little room to express his creative urges. However, occasionally he could work on his own and let the briar speak to him. At first, he settled for just adding creative flairs to the old classics—paneled pipes became a Tarp trademark, and he has garnered acclaim for his interpretation of bulldog pipes—yet through the years he has developed his own unique shapes, such as the Elephant Trunk,

Crown, Beret and Heart.

"The Crown was the first shape I developed on my own," Tarp says. "I did that 30 years ago. I had a very small briar and I was thinking on how to make it look bigger because I was making very small pipes. Suddenly the idea to use the corners of the bowl to make it look bigger came to me. Then the Elephant Trunk came to me on an evening when I was sitting and drawing a little bit. I developed the Beret because the grain on a block of briar was slanted a little on one side, but on the other side the grain was beautiful. To make the best use of the grain, I carved the pipe so that it eventually looked like a beret. I developed the Heart as a sort of Valentine's Day gift pipe. It's got a heart pendant that comes with

the pipe, so maybe a person might be more willing to buy it if he or she knows that his or her spouse will get something from the set as well."

While he gets briar from several different sources, Tarp prefers Corsican because he believes it has tighter grain and he likes its tendency to have a bigger contrast between the darker and lighter patterns in the grain. However, it's expensive, so he uses Corsican briar sparingly.

Tarp uses Ebonite, Cumberland, synthetic amber and horn for his mouthpieces, which he hand cuts.

"I don't like acrylic because it's too plastic," he says. "Ebonite doesn't look good until it's been polished. Acrylic always shines and I don't like that. I know that's the opposite of what most other people say, but I like the work of shining an Ebonite mouthpiece. I used a lot of Cumberland before but I prefer black mouthpieces. They're more beautiful, I think. Black gives a nice contrast to the color of the briar."

The color that Tarp stains the briar depends on whether the pipe has been sandblasted or retains a smooth surface. Most of Tarp's pipes are sandblasted by his pipemaking friends Joao Reis or Svend Hangaard, who live nearby, as Tarp is still learning sandblasting. Sandblasts are almost always stained black or brown. Smooth pipes feature red, orange or brown stains.

"Finishing was the most difficult thing for me to master," Tarp sheepishly says. "Figuring out the colors always causes me problems. I know that some of them are pretty boring, so I have room for improvement in that department. I'd also like to improve my shaping talent. I want to make new shapes and perfect my skill in proportion. I have a tendency to make longer pipes than normal. I'm thinking about it now and I'm improving in proportioning the pipes I make."

Perhaps Tarp's modesty leads him to be a bit too harsh on himself when judging where he has room for improvement. After all, his special model pipes, such as the Crown and the Elephant Trunk, fetch as much as nearly \$1,500 for smooth finishes to

approximately \$750 for a sandblast. In addition to the special model pipes, Tarp grades his other pipes in a tribute to Denmark's Viking heritage—naming each grade after a type of Viking ship.

"Drakkar is the top-of-the-line grade," he states. "It has a good tight grain and the wood is beautiful. It doesn't depend on the shape; it's all about the wood. They come in periods of when I'm feeling very creative. It's a very funny thing the way that happens."

The next highest grade is Skudder, which Tarp says doesn't have quite as nice a grain as Drakkar and that the shape of the pipe can bring it up to a Skudder grade.

"If it took a lot of time to shape it sometimes I will grade it up," Tarp explains. "Not everyone can see the time it takes to make a pipe."

The Drakkar and Skudder grades are all smooth pipes. Tarp reserves his Snigge and Batr grades for rusticated or sandblasted pipes. Exhibiting very weak grain but with a very nicely executed shape, Snigge pipes are available in smooth, rusticated and sandblasted finishes. Batr pipes are exclusively sandblasted.

Working with Kai Nielsen and with Joao Reis and Svend Hangaard, Tarp is once more among fellow pipemakers, among whom casual conversations nearly always drift toward something regarding pipes or pipemaking. Having secured an American distributor for his pipes, in addition to his already strong European and Asian presence, Tarp's future as a full-time pipemaker may finally also be secured—which is all Tarp really wanted in the first place.

"I just want to be able to earn a living as a pipemaker," he says and smiles. "Beyond that, I have no big plans at all." P&T

Karsten Tarp pipes are available wherever fine pipes are sold. Locate your nearest Tarp dealer by contacting Monjure International at 3814 Wesseck Drive, High Point, NC 27265; phone: 336.889.2390; fax: 336.889.9437; email: pipadolce@aol.com; website: www.monjureinternational.com.



Smoke—smokers—smoking

Art imitating art

Often, by way of an introduction, I like to refer to stories that have appeared in previous issues of *Pipes and tobaccos* magazine, especially if my essay parallels, augments or complements an earlier article with a similar theme. This is one of those occasions. "Art Pipes," John Scotello's illustrated article in the fall 2002 issue, addressed a very specific number of artists and their works. The fall 2009 issue contained Chuck Stanion's "Pipes in Oil and Enamel," illuminating Tim Crowder's original art expressions of famous pipe smokers. To set the tenor of what follows, I wrestled with the following puzzlement: If, as it is so often described, pipe smoking is an art, what, then, is the appropriate term for the art of pipe smokers? Scotello labeled his selection of artists' works "Art Pipes," and Stanion grouped Crowder's one-of-a-kind paintings as "Pipes in Oil and Enamel." I address a complementary dimension—art books containing real art—the vast range of smoke-smoker-smoking portraits of all genres and ages ... a very broad look at this special subject.

The initial inspiration to write about this topic was John Scotello. Two years later, in 2004, *Smoke. A Global History of Smoking* was published. Edited by Messrs. Gilman and Xun, this book has had a great influence on me. Quoting the flyleaf, it "examines the culture of smoking in different traditions and locations around the world. From opium dens in Victorian England to tobacco in Edo-period Japan, and from ganja and cocaine to Havana cigars, *Smoke* encompasses the subject as no book has before." Chuck Stanion's article a few years later was yet more encouragement for me to proceed with my own treatise, having decided to cross the

writing Rubicon and share my own views on "smoke" in the art world.

For many years I have kept tabs on every artist's canvas that depicts people—real and imagined—partaking of tobacco in all its forms. Two topical sections in *Smoke*, "Smoking in Art and Literature" and "Smoking, Gender and Ethnicity," reinforced my understanding of this niche interest. One of the book's essays is by Benno Tempel, curator at the Kunsthall, Rotterdam, Netherlands. (Tempel had organized an exhibition in 2003 at that museum, "Taboo and Tobacco: Four Centuries of Smoking in the Arts, from Jan Steen to Pablo Picasso.") In "Symbol and Image: Smoking in Art since the Seventeenth Century," Tempel details the interrelationship between tobacco and art. Three other monographs in *Smoke* offer different, yet complementary, insights on this subject: "The Houkah in the Harem: On Smoking and Orientalist Art," "The Commodified African American in Nineteenth-Century Tobacco Art" and "Smoking & Art." In this last article is a 1928 quotation from Walter Benjamin—Walter Bendix Schönflies Benjamin, to be precise—a Weimar cultural critic, essayist, philosopher and translator:

It is no surprise, therefore, that there is an obsession about representing smoking and smokers in art after the sixteenth century. The act of smoking—whether opium or tobacco or marijuana—is not merely connected with the creative act, it becomes a surrogate for it. Smoking is both hot and cool—it functions in multiple ways, representing not only creativity but also the society in which it functions.

Dolores Mitchell's "Iconology of Smoking in Turn-of-the-Century Art" (in the journal *Source. Notes in the History of*

Art, spring 1987) reinforced the view that although smoking has always had its severe critics, artists composed smoking scenes and the unfurling smoke of cigars, cigarettes and pipes in various alluring and sensual paintings. Jacob Wamberg (ed.), *Art & Alchemy* (Museum Tusulanum Press, 2006), believes that "Pipes and smoking were also a symbol of *vanitas* [Latin for emptiness], and pipes often were included in contemporary Dutch still-lives as a reference to the transience of earthly life." It's in the works of Brouwer, Manet, Mucha, Munch, Steen, Van Gogh and others who took great care to record the expressions of deep inhalation and drowsy puffing of the serious pipe smoker in their paintings. For Van Gogh, pipe smoking was one of his few earthly pleasures, the very reason why many pipe smokers appear among his works. (For those seeking further insight into the significance of depictions of smoking in 17th-century Dutch painting, see Ivan Gaskell, "Tobacco, Social Deviance and Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century," in H. Bock & T.W. Gaetgens (eds.), *Holländische Genremalerei im 17. Jahrhundert* [Berlin: Mann, 1987].) Most all paintings and photographs depicting smokers were, at a time, reproduced as postcards or reprinted in art-book format. Nowadays, it's the Internet that offers a glimpse into these paintings, such as "The Pipe in Art" on the Pipe Club of London website.

Is a picture worth 1,000 words? First, let's be clear about this. It's a Chinese proverb that actually translates as "one picture is worth 10,000 words." Is this true for any or every picture? Probably not, but I'd like to believe that those artists who painted pipe-, cigar- and cigarette-specific subject

matter in so many mediums—oils, lithographs, serigraphs, gouaches, watercolors, pastels, acrylics, etchings, drawings, woodblock prints—would be of some interest to anyone who smoked a pipe, puffed a cigar or drew on a cigarette, whoever writes those words, or however many words that picture might be worth! Were there that many famous images? Absolutely! It's not precisely known who executed the first painting of a smoker, but the theme was certainly prevalent in the golden age of Dutch painting, from about 1580 to the mid-17th century. Later artists, such as Cezanne, Degas, Delacroix, Picasso (like Van Gogh, another pipe lover), Tiepolo, Utrillo and many more of the less famous put brush and paint to canvas to portray their own interpretations, one of several popular subjects, a special and conspicuous genre: the smoker! (This was not the only subject, of course; other common subjects were gamblers, tipplers and soldiers.)

From as early as the 16th century (Jacobo de' Barbari), through the 17th and 18th centuries (Gerard Dou and Henry Fuseli), *trompe l'oeil* (still-life) artists employed a technique involving extremely realistic imagery in order to create the optical illusion that the depicted objects appear in three dimensions, instead of actually being a two-dimensional painting. In the late 19th century, John Haberle, William Michael Hartnett, Mary Jane Numan and John Frederick Peto, American *trompe l'oeil* artists, executed innumerable canvases with one or more assorted vintage pipes always a present component. In his extensive oils repertoire, Stuart Davis (1892-1964), an American artist noted for cubism, produced a series on tobacco between 1921-1924 that may be familiar to museum-going art lovers: "Bull Durham" (Baltimore Museum of Art); "Cigarette Papers" (Menil Collection, Houston); "Lucky Strike" in 1921 (Museum of Modern Art, New York); a slightly different rendition of "Lucky Strike" in 1924 (Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.); and "Sweet Caporal" (Thyssen-

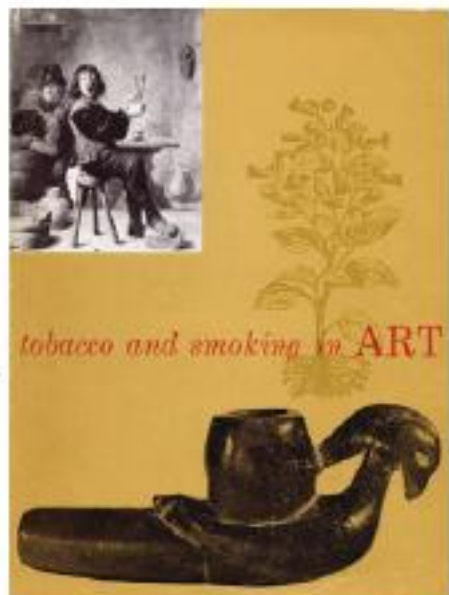
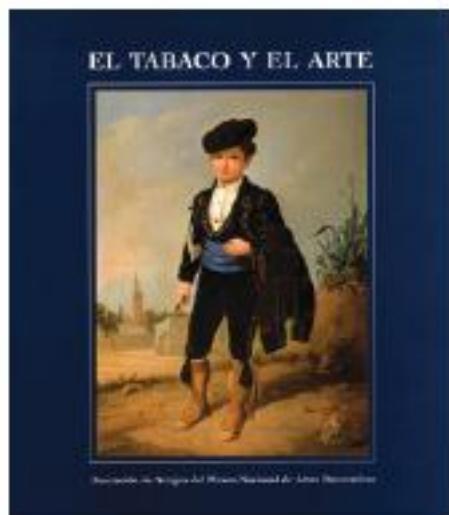
Bornemisza Collection, Madrid, Spain). In the 1920s-1930s, Marc Chagall painted smokers; José Ramon Garcia (Jerry Garcia's dad) painted images of tormented smokers (antitobacco visual messages) in the 1940s; around mid-century, a briar pipe was often a prop in many Norman Rockwell paintings; and Keith Haring did a silkscreen series of *Lucky Strike* in the 1980s. But the most renowned image to date is the meticulous painting of a solitary, bent billiard briar by the Belgian surrealist René Magritte, *Ceci N'est Pas Une Pipe* (1928-1929). Much has been written about this painting in the last 90 years, to include a statement allegedly attributed to the artist: "Just try to stuff it with tobacco! If I were to have had written on my picture 'This is a pipe,' I would have been lying." This is the most famous of Magritte's pipe paintings, but it's not the only canvas on which he portrayed a pipe; each of his pipe canvases modifies this theme in a significant way. Recognize the name Rudolf Wetterau (1891-1953)? He was an American painter, designer and commercial artist who was commissioned to do four paintings for the Kaywoodie Pipe Company, each illustrating pipe smokers.

Why so many artists' renderings of smokers and smoking scenes? British art critic Jonathan Jones, writing in *The Guardian* on May 14, 2007, believes that he knows the answer: "Artists worked out that smoking represented death centuries before doctors did. That's why they love it so much Smoking in art is an emblem of mortality. And yet art is strongly in the pro-smoking lobby: just because something kills you doesn't mean it isn't beautiful or at least 'sublime.'"

How does anyone get his arms around this expansive population, or identify all the artists who have portrayed these inter-related themes through time, all those who painted smokers and smoking scenes to delight, amaze, communicate, provoke curiosity and be inviting? It's relatively easy ... no need to travel the globe to visit every museum to take a picture or make a written record of each one found. Why?

At top: Cover, Clemens-Sels-Museum, *Rauch-Zeichen. Kultur- und Regionalgeschichtliches zum Tabakgenuss* [Smoke Symbols. Cultural and Regional History of Tobacco Pleasure], (Neuss, Germany, 2005). Center: Cover, Asociación de Amigos del Museo Nacio-

nal de Artes Decorativas, *El Tabaco y el Arte* [Tobacco and Art] (Madrid, 1998). Bottom: Cover, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, North Carolina, *Tobacco and Smoking in Art. An Exhibition* (1960). (All photos in this article by David S. Stein.)



Books have already achieved this. Now, if you desire, you can have just about every important smoker image imaginable at your fingertips or within reach in a small space on your bookshelf. Here are all the portfolios that I know, and I hope I haven't missed any important enough to mention.

As you read about these books, note three things. First, the majority of these publications are from Europe, and there is a logical reason for this. As I have stated so often in public and in writing, the Europeans, not so much the Americans, have always been in admiration of, and have an affection for, tobacco; in fact, they continue to have this romance today, however expressed, whether as an art object, a wall calendar, an advertising poster or a mere postcard reproduction of some famous painting. In America, unfortunately, the record indicates that tobacco and its associated utensils have always been treated as commerce, mercantilism, trade—not art—but now and then a bright light appears to contradict this statement, as you will read. Second, the vast majority of these books were not sponsored by the tobacco industry. Noteworthy is the fact that Philip Morris USA has frequently sponsored the arts through the years—ballet, theater and other cultural events—and, in 2006, American Tobacco hosted a Civil Rights Art Exhibition in Durham, N.C., but no American tobacco company has ever funded an exhibit whose principal or singular theme was tobacco in art. In a Jan. 10, 2007, turnabout, New York's *The Sun* announced that the Altria Group [parent company of Philip Morris USA] intended to slash its art funding. This is ironic, that the very industry producing and selling tobacco products chooses not to support tobacco in the arts. However, it's a healthy sign that beyond the tobacco industry there have been and still are communities of interest for any type of art, regardless of the principal theme, communities that are willing to draw the public's attention to the fascinating cultural phenomenon of smoking, as expressed by engravers, graphics designers, lithographers, print makers and those artists crafting two- and three-dimensional art objects focused on smoke. Third, I have divided these works into four very arbitrary categories, based solely on the predominant contents of each book or publication.



GOLDEN LEAVES

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and the Art of Advertising

Cover, *Golden Leaves*. R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and the Art of Advertising (Winston-Salem, NC, 1986). Center, opposite page: Cover, Luigi Salerno, *Tabacco e Fuma Nella Pittura* (Torino, 1954). Far right: Cover, British-American Tobacco (Germany) GmbH: *Rauchzeichen. Tabakhistorische Graphiken und Objekte aus der Sammlung British American Tobacco* [Smoke Symbols. Tobacco-Historic Graphics and Objects from the British American Tobacco Collection] (Hamburg, 1999).

Art for art's sake

Just about every pipe or tobacco history book contains one or more artist's renditions of a pipe smoker or the tobacco plant to add a bit of color to the book, but how about books that focus *only* on art as the singular theme? Two books that focus wholly on reproducing the renditions of famous and not-so-famous artists were published in Italy under the auspices of the state-owned tobacco monopoly. Luigi Salerno's *Tabacco e Fuma Nella Pittura* (1954) is a softcover volume in a hard slipcase containing 102 black-and-white and color plates depicting pipe, cigar and cigarette smokers. Almost 30 years later appeared Enrico d'Anna, *Tabacco Storia Arte* (1983), a bigger, more lushly structured book, also in a hard slipcase, with exacting reproductions in color of a larger quantity of paintings. For this volume, a group of experts scoured the museums of the world to find artwork that did not appear in the Salerno book. (To quote Maya-Art-Books.org, the d'Anna volume is a "fancy coffee table book subsidized by the Italian government as a present to ambassadors, senators. There was no way ever to buy a copy of this book.") These two books are somewhat complementary in that both list the artist and the year of execution of each

work. A less robust work is Henk Egbers, *Tabak in de Kunst* (1987), a hardcover Dutch contribution that offers a similar, but lesser, illustrated content to that of Salerno and d'Anna. The aforementioned Benno Tempel also contributed a lengthy essay to *Rookgordijnen. Roken in de Kunsten: Van Olieverf tot Celluloid* [Smoke Curtains: Smoke in the Arts: From Oil Paintings to Celluloid] (2003), the most recent Dutch entry into the pantheon of printed matter on tobacco arts. As a last, minor entry, Georg Brongers's *Nicotiana Tabacum. The History of Tobacco and Tobacco Smoking in The Netherlands* (1964) contains the illustrated chapter "Tobacco and Art."

Art on exhibition The United States

By art on exhibition I refer to those books published in conjunction with a tobacco art exposition, whether open to the public or by invitation only. Three come to mind, and an illustrated catalog accompanied each exhibition. The first was the North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, N.C., *Tobacco and Smoking in Art. An Exhibition, October 14 through December 4, 1960*. According to the foreword, the exhibition was "to bring together a body of material



TABACCO E FUMO NELLA PITTURA

which will demonstrate the impact that tobacco and smoking has had in the world of art." The softcover catalog does this quite well. In its 150 pages are the images of smokers and of the smoker's utensils that various artists rendered, along with assorted illustrations of pipes from around the globe. (I wish I could have been there!) The second containing very decent art is Jane Webb Smith, *Smoke Signals. Cigarette Advertising and the American Way of Life, April 5 - October 9, 1990* (Valentine Museum, Richmond, Va., 1990). This folio-sized, softcover album is a nice retrospective of much more than the cigarette; it captures poster art, trade cards, caddy labels, magazine covers and more. From January to April 1994, the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, Winston-Salem, N.C., sponsored a very unusual exhibition, "Donald Lipski/Oral History." As a provocative gesture, Lipski, an American artist known as a "master manipulator of the found object," created 30 humidors and filled each with what he estimated was the number of cigarettes he had smoked in each of 30 years. R.J. Reynolds furnished the required quantity of cigarettes: 300,000! Overall, however, this was a rather neutral exhibit, and a sparsely illustrated catalog by the same name was published in conjunction with the exhibition's debut.

A few minor U.S. exhibitions are worthy of mention, although none of these produced a permanent record in conjunction with them. "The Art in Tobacco Farming," the photographs of Carol A. Turrentine, was offered from July through

Nov. 2, 1997, at the Duke University Museum of Art. Her pictures showed the plants, people and implements involved in the process of growing tobacco but, symbolically, the exhibits were placed in the rear corner of this museum. After all, this country is doing its best to end smoking as a national pastime. The New York Public Library arranged "Dry Drunk: The Culture in 17th- and 18th-Century Europe," Sept. 20, 1997-Jan. 3, 1998, at its print gallery to provide, according to its website, "historical context for the uses and abuses of tobacco, showing, among other things, that it has been the focus of endless, if ever-shifting controversy since the moment of its introduction into Europe from the New World." More than 100 books and prints from several in-house collections, particularly the George Arents Tobacco Collection, were on public display for the three-month period but, unfortunately, no retrospective catalog of the exhibit was produced. Last, a few U.S. public museums in the Southeast sponsored the occasional art exhibit in the late 1990s and early 2000s focused on the myriad cigar-box labels and cigar bands produced by accomplished American, German and Cuban lithographers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Sadly, there is no permanent record in the form of catalogs.

Europe

Centro Tibaldi and Pierre Restany, *Art & Tabac. 200 Works of Art for a Battle of Tolerance* (1993), is an outsized, softcover catalog of, as the title indicates, 200 original,



RAUCHZEICHEN

Tabakhistorische Graphiken und Objekte



one-, two- and three-dimensional, full-color works from European artists who were against what they collectively labeled an ongoing antitobacco fanaticism. In lieu of a march or a demonstration, the catalog was produced as a plea for tolerance. This exhibit traveled to several European capitals, so the catalog was published in different languages bearing other exhibition dates.

The first German contribution to come to my attention was sponsored by the German subsidiary of British American Tobacco, BAT Haus, Hamburg, *Raucher & Rauchen, Ansichtssachen aus dem 19. Jahrhundert* [Smokers and Smoking. Matters of Opinion of the 19th Century] (1976). This small, softcover brochure contains 99 diminutive black-and-white reproductions of German, French and English drawings and etchings of smokers from 19th century artists that have often appeared in other books, but still a rather pleasant collective of illustrations. In 1999, BAT did it again with British American Tobacco Germany: *Rauchzeichen. Tabakhistorische Graphiken und Objekte aus der Sammlung British American Tobacco* [Smoke Symbols. Tobacco-Historic Graphics and Objects from the British American Tobacco Collection] (1999). This soft-cover, 140-page retrospective gives the reader a keen sense of the breadth and depth of BAT's holdings in antiquarian tobacciana, from art to art object, all in one volume. In 2002, BAT published a not-for-commercial-sale centennial publication, *Celebrating Our First 100 Years, 1902-2002*, and though it



26
F. Durle
Im Abwasch der Hand
Holzsch. 18, 2 x 12, 8 cm

frische Annäherung signalisierte dagegen das herrschaftliche Rauchzeichen in Dienstverhand



27
E. View
Capa della Penultima, 1797
Holz. Kupferdruck, 22, 6 x 16, 1 cm

Führerqualitäten und Anführer hatten das Pfeifenattribut schnell zu einer interkulturellen Konstante erhoben



28
J. A. H. Kapeller
Der A. A. A. Pionier in Preuss.
Artillerie-Regiment
18, 1 x 14, 1 cm

A page of early 19th century original European illustrations of pipe smokers (reduced size) from *Raucher & Rauchen, Ansichtssachen aus dem 19. Jahrhundert* [Smokers and Smoking. Matters of Opinion from the 19th Century] (BAT-Haus, Hamburg, 1976).

contains the occasional advertising image from the past, it is not on a par with the two aforementioned exhibition catalogs. Not to be outdone, Philip Morris, Europe, S.A., organized a similar exhibition at its headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland, two years after BAT's 1999 exposition, and issued a limited-edition French volume, *Cinq Siècles d'Art et Tabac*, and an English edition, *Five Centuries of Art and Tobacco* (2001), a richly colored survey of tobacco "artefacts, paintings, engravings and books, entirely from private collections." The exhibition was not open to the public; the audience was limited to corporate officers and their invited guests. And, reflective of the continuing love affair between smoking and art, in 2005, the Clemens-Sels-Museum, Neuss, Germany, produced a colorful retrospective catalog of its exhibition of tobacco art and artifacts, *Rauch-Zeichen. Kultur- und Regionalgeschichtliches zum Tabakgenuss* (loosely translated, *Smoke Symbols. Cultural and Regional History of Tobacco Pleasure*). Also worthy of mention is Asociación de Amigos

del Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas, *El Tabaco y El Arte* (October–November 1998), the catalog of a minor celebration of tobacco art sponsored by Tabacalera at this Madrid museum. It is a nice retrospective, but it is thin on the objects illustrated. Not having visited, I don't know whether the actual exhibit contained a more sizeable quantity of tobacco art. The last entry, perhaps the least known, was an exhibition at Galerie Flak, Paris, in June–July 2000. *Art et Cigare* was the accompanying catalog containing one-of-a-kind, original interpretations by more than 50 artists from around the world who came together to paint the cigar stylistically, as object or subject.

Commercial and advertising art

In this category, I include a few books that should appeal to collectors, historians and researchers alike, all designed to illustrate the broad expanse of advertisements for tobacco products: tobacco tins and bins, trade and cigarette cards, caddy labels, posters, cigarette packs, cigar-box labels

and bands, etc. I have selected only a few that best represent this segment.

United States

Golden Leaves. R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and the Art of Advertising (1986), a softcover retrospective dedicated to its employees, was a promotional publication that contained, expectedly, the full-color images of poster, package and container advertisements of most of its products from as far back as 1875. Like so many similar publications, it was not meant for commercial sale. Of more recent vintage is David DeSmith, *A Camel Named Joe. The Illustrated Story of an American Pop Icon* (1998). I am not that excited about the artwork, but I am surprised that this 200-page hardcover book, a very costly design and production effort, was a promotional giveaway with the purchase of Winston cigarettes—part of a Joe Camel advertising campaign aimed at youth—from the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company!

I dare not overlook two of the earliest cigar-label reference books: Davidson, *The Art of the Cigar Label* (1989), and Davidson & Davidson, *Smoker's Art* (1997). If you prefer only the images of sultry, buxom sirens on cigar-box labels, get a copy of Zoila Lapique's *La Mujer en los Habanos* (1996). I include Michael Thibodeau and Jana Martin, *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes. Branding and Design in Cigarette Packaging* (2000), because this handsome 140-page hardcover book is not to be denied; the research and photography are excellent, and the survey of cigarette pack art is global, not domestic.

Europe

To my knowledge, the very first book to illuminate the intricate designs and early lithography used in tobacco advertising was *Der Tabak in Kunst und Kultur* [Tobacco in Art and Culture], produced by the Jos. Feinhals Tobacco Company in 1911. In this handsome softcover book is an assortment of reproduced tobacco labels, color tip-ins and various drawings of smoking scenes. And in 1914, Dr. Eduard Maria Schrank compiled a similar, expanded version of this book, *Tabak Anekdoten. Ein Historisches Braunbuch* [Tobacco Anecdotes. A Historical Brown Book], and it contains a broader selection of the Feinhals Company graphics collection, 175 illustrations to be exact. The most extraordinary volume in my opinion is Elias

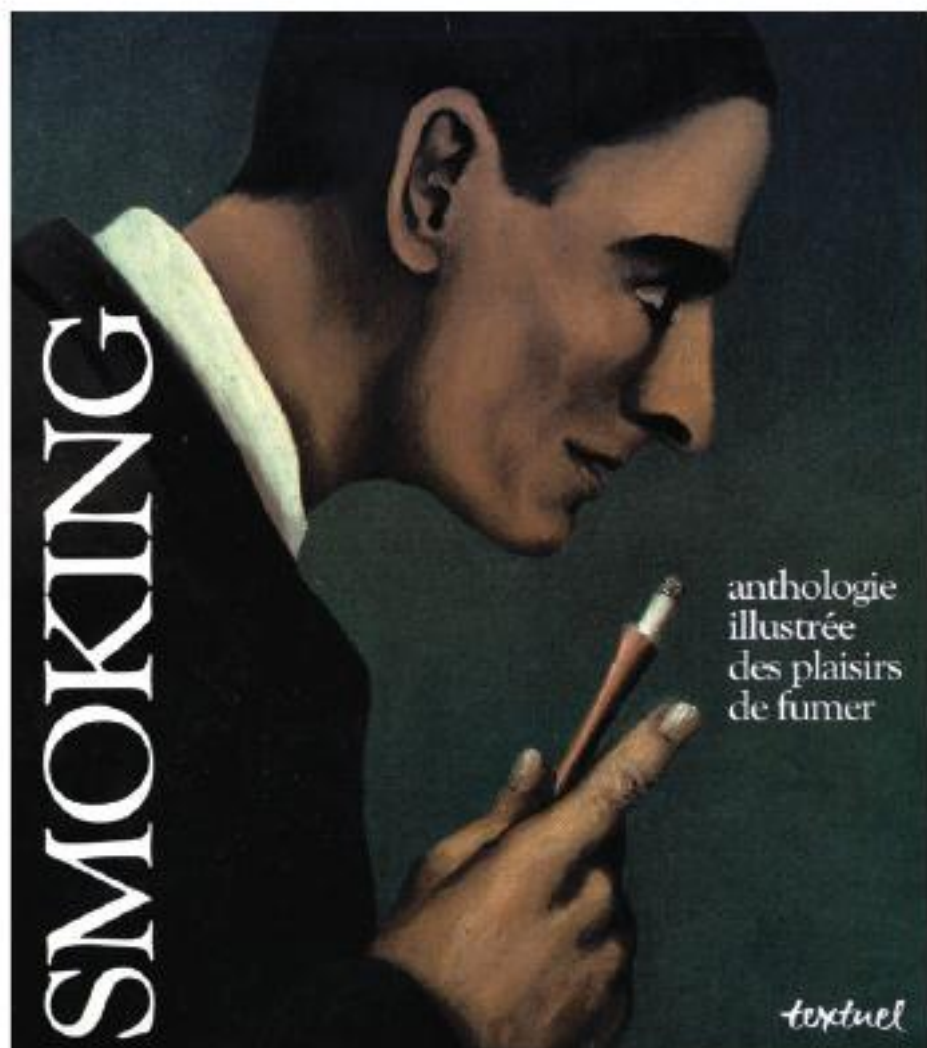
Erasmus, *Alte Tabakzeichen* [Old Tobacco Drawings] (1924), an outsized, hardcover book limited to 410 numbered copies. Throughout this book, illustrated on card-stock pages, are as few as one to as many as four (depending on original size) exactly reproduced tobacco labels in black and white and in occasional colors. I'd estimate that there are 200 or more images of these original labels that were devised for use on paper and cloth tobacco pouches to advertise various brands of that era.

Of more recent vintage is Michael Weisser, *Cigaretten-Reclame. Ueber die Kunst Blauen Dunst zu Verkaufen* [Cigarette Advertising. About the Art of Selling Blue Vapor] (1980). Weisser captures the tenor of those times when myriad tobacco products were available for smokers of every stripe. Throughout the book are images of European trade cards, tobacco tin lithography, cigarette packs, posters, billheads and kiosk signs of tobacco, pipes, cigarettes and cigars. A few years later appeared Magdalena M. Moeller, *Plakate für den Blauen Dunst. Reklame für Zigarren und Zigaretten 1880/1940* (1985). This is a pocketbook-sized volume containing full-color vintage posters from that 60-year period of tobacco production in Europe.

Two of the very best British contributors are Mullen and Dempsey. Chris Mullen's *Cigarette Pack Art* (1979) is an interesting assemblage of cigarette packs from around the globe. Mullen was the first to identify cigarette packaging as an art form, and several similar books in English, German and Italian have followed in its wake. Mike Dempsey is the editor of *Pipe Dreams. Early Advertising Art from the Imperial Tobacco Company* (1982), a retrospective of original, company-designed artworks of pipe smokers, with lots of colorful posters hawking Imperial pipe tobacco brands.

And what of Italy? Here are two. Arcadia Edizioni's *Segni di Fumo* [Smoke Signals. Imagery and Origins of Cigarette Packs] (1990), is a bilingual, color-illustrated survey of cigarette pack art from around the globe. Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, *Fuma? Bibliografia, Storia, Iconografia dell'Uso del Tabacco in Occidente* (1994) is, as the title indicates, truly a mixed bag, a scrapbook of everything to do with tobacco imagery: art, objects, literature and all else in between, illustrated in living black and white.

The Japanese and the French are also



Cover, Tania Hagemester et al., *Smoking. Anthologie illustrée des Plaisirs de Fumer* [Smoking. Illustrated Anthology of the Pleasures of Smoking] (Textuel, Paris, 1997).

notable for books illustrating tobacco-advertising art. Because I am not conversant in Japanese, I'll focus only on the French. In the 1990s, there was a flurry of books from various publishers illustrating the poster art of Gitane and Gallois cigarettes, but one book that drew my attention was released by the national tobacco monopoly, SEITA (the former French state-owned tobacco monopoly that merged in 1999 with its Spanish equivalent, Tabacalera, to form Altadis): *Années 30-40-50, Graphismes et Créations SEITA* (1985) [Years 1930, 1940, 1950. Graphics and Creations, SEITA]. This softcover volume exposes the viewer to the colorful graphic art—posters, cigarette packs and cigar ads—designed for the company over a time span of some 30 years. Three other French books come to mind: SEITA, *Le Tabac dans l'Art, l'Histoire et la Vie* (Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, Dec. 15, 1961–Jan. 15, 1962); André de Peretti, *Psy-*

chologie du Fumeur (Extrait de Caractères Noël, 1962); and Tania Hagemester et al., *Smoking. Anthologie illustrée des Plaisirs de Fumer* (1997). And France has its answer to Mullen and Arcadia Edizioni in Freddy Ghosland, *Ces Pubs Qui Ont Fait Un Tabac* (1989), illustrating about 200 cigarette packs and tobacco ads; interestingly enough, the majority of the images are of American brands.

The occasional oddity

One book whose title does not reflect its actual contents is Jean Deunff, *Pipes et Tabacs en Bretagne Autrefois* (1977). The translation is *Pipes and Tobacco in Brittany in the Past*, and the contents are reproduced black-and-white postcards of elderly men and women of Brittany smoking cutty-style clay pipes. Evidently, there must have been many a paparazzi that traveled around this historical French province snapping photos of



FIVE CENTURIES OF ART AND TOBACCO

Cover, Philip Morris, Europe, S.A., *Five Centuries of Art and Tobacco* (Lausanne, Switzerland, 2001).

these indigenous folks, because the book is replete with these images.

If one admires the female figure, one can enjoy the voyeuristic pleasure of photographs of the female nude and, more particularly, those nudes sufficiently narcissistic to be photographed while they smoked. I am familiar with five books that focus on this unique subject, but there may be more. Each of these five is a compilation of reproduced girlie photographs and postcards in black and white from the 1920s and 1930s: the semi-nude, the barely covered and the just plain, all-skin types, none subtle, all sensual, either holding or puffing a cigarette or cigar: Jacques-Henri Lartigue, *Les Femmes aux Cigarettes* (1980) and *Femmes aux Cigares* (1980); M. Koetzle and U. Scheid, *Feu d'Amour. Seductive Smoke* (1994); C. Brandstätter, *Vom Blauen Dunst. Rauchen in alten Photographien* (1995); and Roberto Salas, *Tabaco, El Erotismo de un Aroma* (1999).

Unfortunately, I've not yet found a comparable art book in this same genre depicting pipe-smoking *femmes fatales*. Perhaps not an oddity, but best tucked in here is Philippe Raynaert and Philippe Elhem, *Le Cinéma en Fumée* (1990), a coffee table-sized volume of black-and-white still photographs of iconic Hollywood and European actors, all of whom are *in flagrante delicto*—caught smoking—while *in vestis*!

Then, there's the odd volume that defies precise classification. Befitting this theme is F.A. Meyer-Roland and Helmut Hochrain's *Gentlemen Only* (1963), a book that only a couple clever Germans could have put together. *Gentlemen Only* places the contemporary briar pipe at center stage, integrated into imaginative and original pen-and-ink sketches that tell a story—accompanied by very few words—so that it universally appeals to any pipe smoker with a sense of humor. Almost half a century later, *Gentlemen Only* remains a one-of-a-kind book

whose unique art has not been duplicated or replicated anywhere.

I've mentioned all those that I consider apropos of the topic, but there are many other illustrated volumes on tobacco-related art absent from this essay that can be found in bookstores, such as Ralph and Terry Kovel, *The Label Made Me Buy It* (1998); Petrone, *Tobacco Advertising. The Great Seduction* (1996) ... and just too many to list.

A final word

There is visible proof of the continued demand for real art illustrating the pipe, and I cite two relatively recent auction highlights, neither of which the average Joe pipe smoker would probably buy. Pablo Picasso's 1905 *Garçon à la Pipe* (Boy with a Pipe) was sold at Sotheby's, New York, in May 2004, for \$104 million, a milestone in the art world, believed to be the most expensive painting ever sold at auction. And in April 2008, Sotheby's (England) sold a relatively unknown painting by the Greek artist Georgios Jakobides (1853-1932), *Grandpa's New Pipe* (1886), depicting a boy, dressed in lederhosen and stocking cap, drawing on an unlit Ulmer pipe, for \$1.07 million! This one is not a Brouwer, a Munch, a Picasso, a Steen, a Van Gogh or from the brush of any other world-renowned artist, but it's a nice round price for real pipe art, the kind hung on a wall, rather than perched on a bookshelf.

So, my question is: "Why buy an original work of art when any of these compendia of tobacco-related art sells for much, much less and takes up very little space on a shelf or a coffee table, compared to expensively matted and framed art mounted on a wall? Sure, it ain't the real thing, but it's more practical, if you like this sort of stuff: buy one or a few of these books and spend more of your disposable money on other tobacco goodies. Why? You can only see the art in question—it's just one sense—but buy a pipe or a cigar and you experience four senses: see, touch, smell and taste! In contrast, it may not be as melodic or as moving as listening to Modeste Musorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* while sensing a variety of moods his pictures invoke, but by spending far, far less, one can acquire several of the books mentioned in this essay and ferret out thousands of smoke-smoker-smoking pictures—adapting the Yellow Pages slogan—by letting your fingers do the looking! P&T

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OK, we're lying about the puppies, but the new website is real and it's a huge improvement. "The old *P&T* website," says editor Chuck Stanion, "was awful. Trying to add content to it was like twisting out my own teeth with a junkyard socket wrench. The new site is much better—more like hitting myself in the knee with a medium-weight ball peen hammer."

It's cleaner, streamlined, easy to navigate and full of new features, including improved search functions. And it's easier to find: www.pipesandtobaccosmagazine.com. "We got rid of that pesky hypen," says Stanion, referring to the old www.pt-magazine.com. "That hypen mocked me. I only wish we could have buried it so I could dance on its grave."

The new site is online as of June 6, 2011. Watch it for regular updates, informative links, RSS feeds and extensive archived content.

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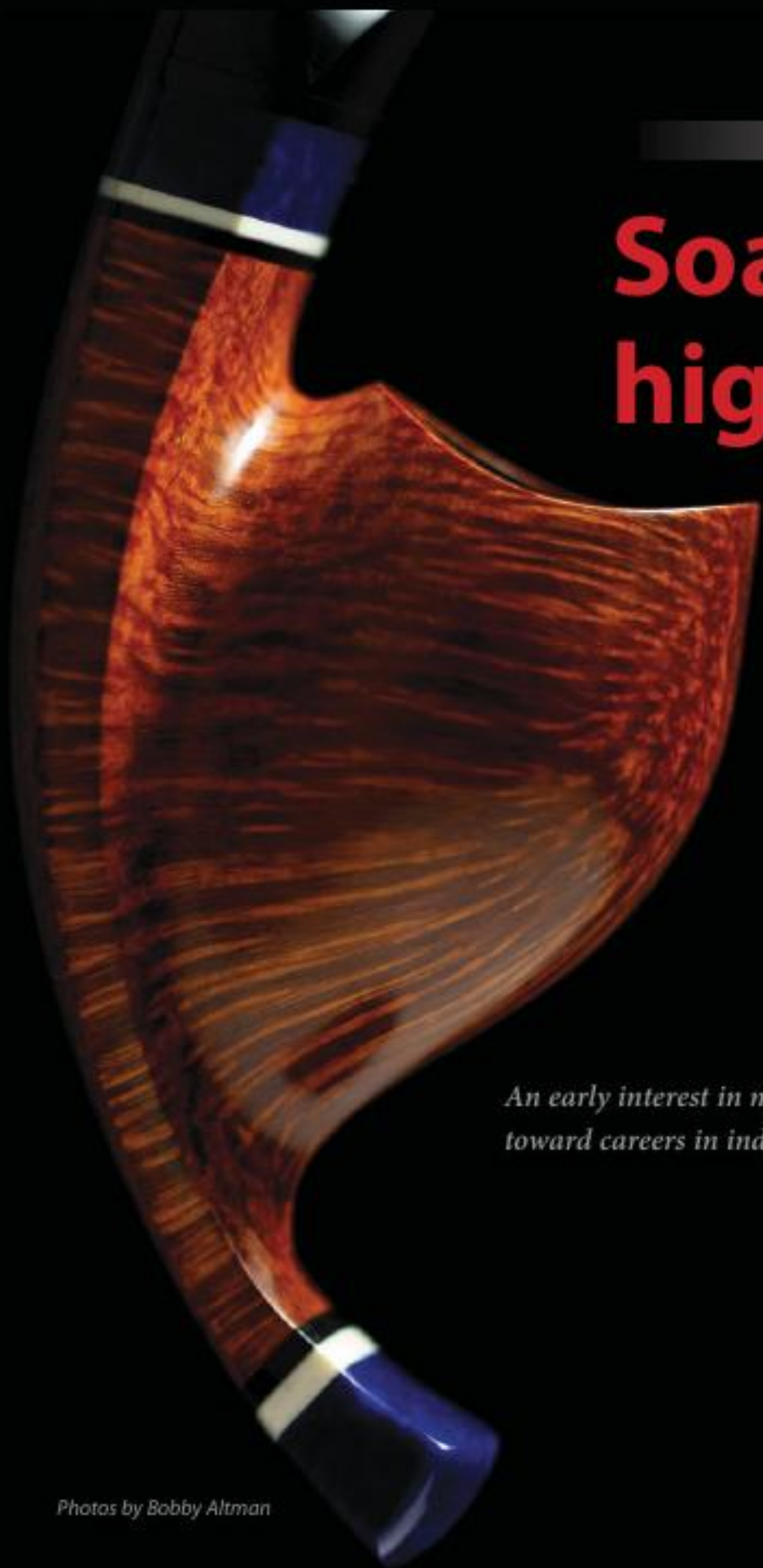
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BY STEPHEN A. ROSS

Soaring higher

*An early interest in model aircraft leads Alex Florov
toward careers in industrial design and pipemaking*

Photos by Bobby Altman

If Alex Florov had been a professional boxer, he could be compared to Muhammad Ali. That's not to say that Florov is the greatest pipemaker of all time—who could make such a claim? However, Florov's pipes are as graceful as Ali's boxing skills. As Ali easily glided around the boxing ring, mesmerizing opponents and spectators with his genius, so Florov uses his immense talent and patience to carefully make his hand-held chisels breathe life into inanimate objects. They exhibit smooth, flowing lines that seemingly give Florov's creations lives of their own—making Florov a sort of Geppetto of briar. And his skills have drawn tremendous praise from pipemakers and collectors alike—all waiting to once again witness his immense talent. Like anyone who is said to possess a gift, however, Florov wasn't born able to craft beautiful smoking pipes. It took years for him to develop as an artisan—a path he started when he was approximately six years old and drawn to model aircraft.

Born in Moscow in 1969, Florov became interested in aviation at a very early age, thanks to the occupations of his paternal grandfather, mother and father—all of whom were aircraft engineers. The young Florov began modeling like almost every other kid—buying plastic model kits and assembling them on the kitchen table. However, Florov soon grew bored with those kits and began designing and building models of his own. Building 1:48 scale models and concentrating on giving them very fine detail, Florov became a prominent member of the Scale Historical Miniatures Society in Moscow, creating a name for himself among collectors who commissioned him to make models for them for the first time.

"That became my second occupation back in Russia," Florov says inside the workshop located in the basement of his suburban Chicago home. "I had a lot of commissions to make special models for pilots who wanted to remember the planes they had flown in combat. And I learned about aviation history because I would make the model and then become interested in that plane's history."

While Florov learned aviation history, his highly detailed model building gave him a keen eye and helped him develop the steady hand required to work in the smallest dimensions. Impressed by his obvious talent, a furniture restorer hired Florov to work on high-end and antique furniture restorations. Florov did more than simply sand and re-stain furniture—he often had to re-create missing parts and match his repairs so that no one could tell that repair work had been done. Through modeling and furniture restoration, Florov had developed sophisticated skills with woodworking tools, yet his chief desire was to become a doctor. He traded in his chisels in the hope of learning how to wield scalpels with equal precision.

While at medical school, Florov met Vera Slonim, a young woman with dreams of becoming a dentist. The two quickly fell in love. In 1990, Vera's family, which had relatives living in the Chicago area, decided to leave Russia for the United States. Undaunted that his love had moved half a world away, Florov made plans to follow Vera, ending his pursuit of a medical career.

"When I came to the U.S. in 1992, I had to wait for two months until I could get the right clearance to work," Florov explains. "I wanted to be a legal immigrant so I made sure I did everything according to the rules. When I was finally cleared to work, I decided that I would use my talent for woodworking and modeling to find a job. My first job in the U.S. was as a cabinet maker. That was more table-saw work than real woodworking. Then I attended a modeling hobby show in Chicago and I met a Russian who worked at the well-known hobby modeling company Revell-Monogram. They had no openings at the company, but he had a friend who had gone to start his own company. I spent five years working there making plastic model kits—mostly cars—and I learned a lot. Then I found a job at a major toy developing company; here I designed a lot of flying toys and my name appeared on a few patents. After that, I started working for an industrial design company making models of laptops, phones and even aircraft seats."

Thirteen years passed as Alex and Vera settled into a life in the Chicago area and began to raise a family. A pipe smoker since he was 16, Florov saved his money to establish a budget to buy tobacco, especially Virginia blends, and the occasional pipe. Florov admired the work of high-grade artisans such as Tonni Nielsen, Tom Eltang, Kent Rasmussen, Teddy Knudsen, Lars Ivarsson and many others, yet he could rarely afford their work. In 2004, Vera's father, who was also a pipe smoker, visited, and Florov showed him websites containing images of all the pipes that Florov had admired.

"We were on the Internet looking at all these pipes," Florov recalls. "I said to my father-in-law, 'What I like I cannot afford and what I can afford I do not like.' I don't know why I didn't think of it myself, but he asked me why I hadn't thought about making pipes for myself."

Vera's father gave Florov a pipe made from fruit wood and challenged him to make some pipes. Florov did and then, like those days when he was a child moving from plastic kits to custom models, Florov sought another challenge, and he secured some briar from Pimo and Mark Tinskey.

"I used the Internet to understand exactly what I liked about pipes," Florov explains. "Carving the wood was easy; the one thing I didn't understand was the mouthpieces. I saw the premolded pieces that were available to me, but then I looked at what Bo Nordh, Teddy Knudsen and Kent Rasmussen were doing with their mouthpieces and I didn't see those shapes there. Fortunately, I got lucky at the right moment."

That luck came during a trip to Cigar King to buy some pipe tobacco, when several members of the Chicago Pipe Club were inside the store. Florov came into the shop smoking a pipe, and they asked him if he had ever heard about the club. He hadn't, but he quickly joined his fellow pipe enthusiasts.

"That was an explosion for me—for information and everything," Florov fondly recalls. "They adopted me as one of their own. Everybody helped right away, especially Rex Poggenphol, who introduced me to everybody who is anybody in the pipe world."

With the connections that Poggenphol helped him make, Florov secured better briar from Tom Eltang and Romeo



Florov's Egyptian set



Florov developed the Scarab shape to complete the four-pipe Egyptian set



Briar. He made a few more pipes, each one a Florov interpretation of pipes he had admired on the Internet. And then he was ready for his first pipe show in Chicago in 2005.

"I remember going to my first show," he comments, a broad smile creasing his mustached face. "It was like going to a different planet. Everybody is friendly and there was no competition between carvers. They all helped me a lot."

One pipemaker in particular spent a lot of time with Florov at that show. Bo Nordh had made the trip from Sweden to attend his first Chicago pipe show. Frank Burla had introduced Nordh to Florov, and Nordh wheeled over to Florov's table to examine his work and talk about pipemaking and design.

"He came to my table, examined my pipes and started giving me advice," Florov recalls. "He gave me a lecture for two hours about how to make a mouthpiece. He made sketches and I still have all those sketches. I should frame them. From that time on, I just followed his numbers—the magic numbers."

Nordh had unlocked for Florov the secret to handcrafting mouthpieces and the important aspects of their internal engineering. Other pipemakers shared other information, which Florov had already instinctively known—look around at what other pipemakers are doing, draw inspiration from them and realize that almost anything is possible.

A big collector of high-grade pipes, Florov likes to use them, not only as excellent smoking devices, but also to study and learn. In his collection are pipes from Radice, Tokutomi, Tonni Nielsen, Sixten Ivarsson, Peter Heeschen and many others. Florov describes himself as a sentimental collector—he likes to buy pipes from his friends.

"I'm very sentimental about pipes. When I smoke a Peter Heeschen pipe I can't help but think about Peter. I remember our good time at the show, and I'm looking forward to the next show and I wonder what he's doing. The same thing happens when I smoke Tonni's pipes or when I smoke Toku's pipes. That's why I have pipes from other pipemakers. There is inspiration in there too. I smoke them and sometimes I see something that I like in somebody else's pipe. I try to understand exactly why I like that pipe, and it's usually because of



Calla Lily Pierced by the Artist's Brush

the way the pipemaker created the pipes' lines. I then try to incorporate it in my own way."

Florov's most recent inspiration came from watching Disney's *Oceans* documentary late at night when he saw a Spanish dancer swimming in the ocean. Florov admired Tokutomi's interpretation of the Spanish dancer. He became inspired to make one for himself.

"I had only seen photos of the Spanish dancer at the bottom of the sea, but then the documentary showed it swimming," Florov explains. "It swims almost vertically and it's incredible to see, so then I thought about how I can transfer that movement into the wood—the grain, the shape, the position of the bowl, shank and mouthpiece to create the perfect version of Spanish dancer of my own. I'm still working on sketching and developing that shape."

This gets to the core of Florov's design esthetic and why his pipes are so interesting to see—he brings movement and life into inanimate objects.

"What I'm trying to do is an old modeler's dream," he says. "A scale modeler tries to make the world in miniature. I'm trying to transfer something that moves into the wood so that it maintains the same dynamic and ideas and that people will recognize what it is. I want to inject aesthetic value and practical use all in one thing. That's why I am so drawn to Oriental cultures because they inject everything with animation. Everything has a soul. I call pipemaking a functional

art. You consume tobacco from it so it's a form of pleasure, but it's also a form of art."

Florov cites his Calla Lily shape as his first attempt to breathe life into briar. It's a shape he continues to improve on. Florov draws inspiration from anything he sees in nature, which is why he very rarely uses anything other than a natural material on his pipes.

"I don't use acrylics," he states. "They're not nature, they're chemistry. I also don't use metal. I have only made one pipe that had a silver ring on it, and that ring was supplied by a close friend who ordered the pipe from me. I can't say that I don't like metal, it's just that I don't understand it."

A part-time pipemaker, Florov's primary job remains in the industrial design modeling field. He finds time to make pipes during the evenings and on weekends during the summer. In the winter, he follows another passion—downhill skiing. An avid skier who likes to race downhill, Florov plans on securing a ski instruction certificate by the 2011-2012 skiing season. Still, while he may spend part of his free time on the slopes, he finds a day or two to make pipes in the winter. Currently, he crafts 45 to 55 pipes a year, and he believes that being a part-time pipemaker is a boon to his creativity.

"It's beneficial because I'm not thinking about making my next mortgage payment," Florov explains. "I can concentrate on making the perfect shape

and finish, rather than paying a bill. Basically I'm self-sufficient with my hobby, because I spend a lot of money on pipes and tobaccos. In order to keep my family budget untouched, I make pipes."

"Another good thing about being a part-time carver is that I have more freedom to make something that I find pleasing. I do have mostly commissions but I can make a pipe that I like and not have to worry about a paycheck. I'm OK if I don't sell that pipe. It's no big deal. I can just smoke it myself."

While Florov works a full-time job, his thoughts are never too far from making pipes.

"I draw pipes during lunch time on tissue paper. I prefer tissue paper because then I can overlay those layers and I can develop a shape through several drawings. Then I cut out what I finalize and bring them home. I save the cutout then trace it right on the block. Some people actually like to own the paper pieces that inspired the pipes I made for them, so I also give them the papers if they like."

One of Florov's most challenging projects—one for which he spent quite a few lunch hours drawing sketches—was a commissioned Egyptian-themed set. The customer asked Florov to make a set of pipes that would represent different aspects of Egyptian history, culture, religion and archaeology. Intrigued by the challenge, Florov accepted.

"It all began with a conversation with



a friend of mine," Florov explains. "He asked me if I could make him an Egyptian set since I already made a Ramses and a Sphinx shape. The challenge would be to create two more shapes that would complement the other two, because the Ramses and Sphinx are two completely different levels of pipe. Sphinx is a beautiful shape but it looks simpler than a Ramses."

Florov began sketching the project in October 2009. By January 2010, he finished the first pipe, a Ramses. He then completed the Sphinx. Through his sketches, he kept working on variations of his floating blowfish design, which became the Nefertiti.

"I had the King and Queen and I had the Sphinx, but I needed one more shape to round out the series," he explains. "I bought a lot of books on Egyptian archaeology and history, which inspired me to create the Scarab. I then took some ideas from the books I had pored over to sketch a concept for the box the set came in. A friend of Adam Davidson's completed the box using all-natural materials."

When he finished the set in October 2010, Florov felt a mixture of both pride and relief at his accomplishment. Florov knew that making the set that met his demanding criteria would be challenging; he never dreamed just how difficult it would be.

"There were a lot of struggles to design the new shapes—finding the blocks for them; matching the colors and the grains because they all had to have the same colors and the same grain intensity. The other challenge was how to make it look Egyptian beyond the names of the pipes. Gold was out of the question. I searched for material that goes through Egyptian history. I realized the blue lapis lazuli was what I liked most. I started looking for real stone and I didn't find any big pieces, but I was lucky enough to find a nice stone material based from real blue lapis lazuli and it had some gold lines in it. That blue material has yellow metal inside and it looks absolutely gorgeous. I never knew it would be that much of a struggle when I started. When I finished I told the guy who ordered it that if he wanted another one to please wait five years. That's probably the shortest amount of time I will allow between sets if I ever make another one. It sucked



With fluid movement, Florov uses hand chisels to enliven the briar (opposite page).

everything out of me. It was a very big but exciting challenge, but I also got inspiration for other pipes that I may make in the future."

While full-time job responsibilities, the expectations of raising a family and the demands of finding the perfect blocks from which to turn his sketches into three-dimensional smoking pipes take Florov considerable time, the actual method he has chosen to carve his pipes is time-consuming as well. Just as he did when restoring and repairing antique furniture, Florov uses hand chisels to do most of the fine-detail carving—on both the briar and the mouthpiece—which gives him a higher level of precision. Florov does only the rough shaping on a disc sander before sitting down at his workbench with dozens of chisels of various lengths, widths and shapes to tediously chip away at the wood, revealing his ultimate design. Florov estimates that it takes him approximately 15 hours to carve a classic pipe and as many as 75 hours for more intricate shapes.

"Shaping is probably the most fun," Florov explains. "Chisels are the best tools to use because they provide more precision, especially on ebonite. I keep my tools very sharp so that I can cut across the grain without hurting the briar. Another nice benefit of using chisels is that you see the grain right away. The tool is polished, so when you cut away with the chisel the surface of the wood is kind of polished, whereas with a sander it's always a matte surface. Chisels also allow you to easily create concave lines, which you cannot do with sanding discs. I don't know why more people don't use them. In other forms of woodworking they all use chisels."

Like many pipemakers, once the shape of the pipe has been finished, Florov considers the pipe completed, except for the tedium of sanding and staining, which he estimates takes up to 50 percent of the time he spends on every pipe.

"I'd like to have a jar full of trained termites to take care of that for me," he jokes. "The more elaborate the shape, the more sanding required. For the past 10 years, I trained myself to do some tedious stuff at work, so it's not such a big deal now. I just do it with a movie on in the background. I then realize that I spent three hours



working after the movie is over."

Bamboo is Florov's favorite material with which to adorn a pipe. He also likes to use horn from bulls and water buffalo, a cellulose material and pre-embargo ivory—natural elements that bond well with Florov's natural aesthetic. One item he is interested in using is albatross bone. So far, he's been unable to locate any, so he attempts to use wood or ivory to imitate it. "It just interests me," he says.

While he was only a pipe smoker and collector, Florov noticed that the pipes he would buy had different smoking characteristics. He wondered why this was so—they were, after all, made from the same wood and the same materials.

"Once I started making pipes I began to discover the difference," he explains. "For me, a pipe starts with its engineering, and the way the inside of the mouthpiece is designed makes all the difference. The most important aspect to all my pipes is that they must pass a pipe cleaner completely through the pipe. No matter how intricate its design, the pipe must be smokeable."

When he first started making his own mouthpieces after his conversation with Nordh, Florov developed a system of manufacture for himself that he has continuously tweaked as he improves his skill and the time it takes to complete a mouthpiece.

"It's taken me almost four years to

learn how to craft a mouthpiece on the inside and the outside," he comments. "I want a mouthpiece that is comfortable to hold in the mouth, yet is wide enough to allow the smoke to pass through. Those are two opposite sides of a dilemma. I strongly believe that it's got to be a very comfortable thing because the piece goes into the mouth and connects you to the pipe. It creates that relationship."

Florov describes himself as one of the few pipemakers who makes the button resemble the mouthpiece of a trumpet. From there, the draft hole seamlessly runs its course down to the tobacco chamber without any sharp angles to cause turbulence and stoke up the heat of the smoke.

"I polish my mouthpieces inside too," he says. "While the drill may make the hole, it's the pipemaker who finalizes it. If the transition is not right, it can affect the pipe's smokeability. That transition should be as smooth as glass to prevent turbulence."

While the inside of the mouthpiece is polished to prevent turbulence, Florov also ensures that the draft hole and tobacco chamber meet exactly at the bottom and center of the bowl. He also sands the inside of the shank to remove any splinters that could cause turbulence, and he leaves the smallest of gaps between the mortise and tenon so that the

expansion of the wood won't push the tenon out of the mortise.

Florov grades his pipes using a very simple system—Elephant Grade (*slonim* in his native Russian) is the highest grade and includes a stamp of an elephant. The pipes are graded in descending order: A+, A, B and C. Beyond that, there is only Blast grade. He sometimes grades his blasts in A or B categories. "All of my B-graded sandblasted pipes are for my personal use or for very close friends." Florov's Blast grades start for approximately \$550, and the most expensive pipe he has sold was \$2,600.

"That was a very special piece of wood," Florov says, describing the most expensive pipe he has made.

Florov's standard nomenclature is: "Alex Florov," "Handcrafted" and "USA," followed by two numbers and a letter. The two numbers signify the year in which the pipe was made, and the letter indicates the grade.

"I started to date my pipes three years ago just to keep track, especially when I only make a few of a particular shape," Florov explains. "I just want to see how I'm progressing as a pipemaker. When I see an older pipe I see a lot of things that I would have done differently now that I know better."

And though he's already an accomplished pipemaker, Florov understands that there is always

room for improvement.

"I'd like to continue to develop new and different shapes," he comments. "I have two directions to go—crazy, sculptured artistic shapes, meant mainly for collectors, and I'd like to finesse my regular pipe-making. The beauty is in simplicity for any of the traditional classical shapes. It's all about proportions, and those proportions are fractions of a millimeter, and it takes years to learn that. Then I'd like to improve on how I can combine all those branches together. I'd also like to explore new ways on how to make a pipe using a Danish approach. Discovering different ways of assembling things, working on the chemistry of the stains so that they can penetrate deeper and raise the grains better are things that I would like to accomplish. Develop new shades of stain. These are all areas that I would like to develop."

Honing his artisanal talent—whether in model-making or in pipemaking—has been the one constant in Florov's life. Starting from plastic modeling kits, he has turned a hobby into a profession, which has given him the opportunity to turn his passion for pipes and tobaccos into another career. Albeit part-time, that pipemaking career may very well be the more rewarding one for Florov, emotionally and spiritually.

"It's fun to make pipes," he enthuses. "It's incredibly fun to work with wood that can be very temperamental. It's always interesting to see what's inside that briar even if it looks perfect from the outside. The other fun is to go to the shows and see your friends. Basically at Chicago, my average time to sleep is two or three hours each night. I don't want to sleep! There's too much fun going on. I now know almost all of the pipemakers in the world and it's more than friendship. We exchange ideas all of the time. That's what keeps me going—exchange ideas and continue our friendships. It's hard to describe; it's like the Energizer Bunny that keeps on going. We're just trying to keep it going and soar to new heights." P&T



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A natural artist, Chris Morgan has been making pipes since 2006. Using the highest-quality briar available from Romeo Briar, Morgan handcrafts each pipe one at a time and hand cuts each mouthpiece from the finest German Cumberland and Ebonite available. Morgan meticulously works to ensure that every pipe he makes will allow a pipe cleaner to pass easily through the draffhole to the tobacco chamber. Morgan describes his carving philosophy as seeking a compromise with the briar, and he refrains from working off sketches unless a customer demands a specific shape. He does not offer any grades because the quality of his work is evolving with every pipe he makes.

Learn more about Morgan pipes by visiting the website at www.morganpipes.com. You may also contact Morgan at 408.600.0524; email: cmolio2@mac.com.



G.L. Pease JackKnife Plug

The first blend in G.L. Pease's New World Collection, JackKnife Plug is an all-natural blend of dark-fired Kentucky leaf and ripe, red Virginia tobaccos, layered on a central core of golden flue-cured leaf, offering deep, earthy flavors with a hint of bright Virginia sweetness. The tobaccos are pressed and matured in cakes before being cut into 2 oz. bars and packaged. JackKnife Plug is a stout blend with a subtle smokiness and an engaging finish.

G.L. Pease tobaccos are manufactured and distributed to premium tobacco retailers by Cornell & Diehl. For more information, visit www.glpease.com, or contact Cornell & Diehl at 800.433.0080.



Obsidian stem oil

Obsidian stem oil is specifically designed to prevent vulcanite, Ebonite or Cumberland stems from oxidizing and keep them looking like new for longer. In addition to conditioning and sealing the pores of the vulcanite, Obsidian contains paraben-free UVA/UVB protection. After smoking, wipe off the stem, apply a drop of Obsidian oil and rub it in, buffing the stem with a soft cloth 30 minutes later. For more information or to order, visit www.obsidianpipe.com; email: info@obsidianpipe.com.



Pipe motif money clip and tobacco leaf key chain

Handcrafted by sculptor Bruce Stanford of Las Cruces, N.M., each money clip face is fashioned from solid white bronze using a time-consuming wax casting process, while the rest of the clip is made from nickel. The pipe depicted on the money clip is inspired by a Paolo Becker pipe from R.D. Field owner David Field's personal pipe collection. The money clips are available with the white bronze face or a sterling silver face.

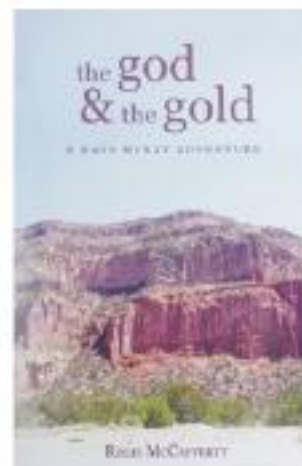
Also made by Stanford, the key rings are made from golden bronze using the same wax casting process. The key rings depict three tobacco leaves as they are being gathered into a bunch.

Both the money clips and key rings are for sale through R.D. Field dealers. Find your closest dealer by visiting www.rdfield.com. The money clips may also be ordered directly from Stanford at 575.382.9447; email: mbstanford@msn.com.



Park Lane tinned tobaccos

Park Lane, an old-fashioned, full-service tobacconist located 20 miles north of Albany, N.Y., now offers its popular proprietary blends in 8 oz. and 2 oz. tins. To see the full line of Park Lane premium tobaccos, visit the website at www.parklanetobacconist.com or visit the store at 15 Park Ave., Clifton Park, NY 12065; 518.371.6274.



The god & the gold: A Hays McKay Adventure

Regis McCafferty's latest novel follows the adventure of Hays McKay, an Ohio security firm investigator who is hired to learn the whereabouts of a friend gone missing in New Mexico. In the process of his search, McKay uncovers Inca gold and a group of robbers intent on claiming it for themselves.

The god & the gold can be purchased at Amazon.com.



SmartMouth mouthwash

With twice-daily use, SmartMouth (www.smartmouth.com) mouthwash kills germs and eliminates odors in a 24-hour period, ensuring fresh breath after smoking. Using a patented, dual-solution technology developed by Triumph Pharmaceuticals at the State University of New York, Stony Brook, SmartMouth requires two active ingredients to be kept separate until just prior to rinsing to ensure that SmartMouth is freshly activated with each use to provide unmatched, long-term fresh breath. SmartMouth's oxidizer in Solution 1 eliminates existing bad breath when you rinse, but it does not kill germs. SmartMouth's zinc ion technology, created by the combination of Solution 1 and Solution 2, prevents germs from producing new bad breath gases for long-term fresh breath.

SmartMouth mouthwash is available in mint and cinnamon flavors and can be purchased at major retail chains or online at www.drugstore.com.



BY TAD GAGE AND JOE HARB

Trial by FIRE

Few global brands can lay claim to 157 years of continuous market presence. Rattray, founded by Charles Rattray in 1854 in Perth, Scotland, is one of those. Today, Germany's Kohlhasse & Kopp continues to produce blends consistent with the old names and recipes as described in "Rattray's Booklet on Tobacco Blending," which dates from at least the late 1930s. Charles Rattray

may well have originated the "Scottish Mixture," but even this classic catalog does not completely answer the question: "What exactly is a Scottish mixture?" The only specific tobacco references are Syrian Latakia, Havana and Djubec and Mahalla Oriental tobaccos. Yet many of the Rattray blends incorporate Burley-based black Cavendish, and many agree this is a

key component of a Scottish mixture, which also includes Virginia, Latakia and Orientals. We selected a sampling of blends from the current Rattray lineup. In keeping with the "old timey" tradition of Rattray blends, we are also reviewing new "throwback" blends from G.L. Pease and E. Hoffman Company.

Distinguished Gentleman: E. Hoffman Company

GAGE: Before there was Iwan Ries, there was Edward Hoffman, who founded the venerable firm in 1857 and eventually sold the business to Ries, his nephew. The company revived the Hoffman name, introducing Hoffman's Spilman Mixture. Following up that successful release, Distinguished Gentleman makes its debut. Like Spilman, this mixture has an old-time feel, combining Burley, Virginias, black Cavendish and Latakia with a light aromatic casing. The tin aroma offers up chocolate, vanilla and dried rose petals but is not cloying.

Easy lighting and burning despite its moderately moist nature, it generates billows of rich smoke with a lot of sweetness and no bitterness from the aromatic topping. While the sweetness is dessertlike in character, the tobaccos harmonize to create a smoky-earthly-fruity combination. Many aromatic blends promise genuine sweetness and interest, but few deliver like Distinguished Gentleman. A pleasing room aroma is a plus. Every re-light



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provided a few extremely sugary first puffs.

For aromatic blend lovers, this tobacco could bring an end to that quest for the perfect everyday smoke. Available in 2.5- and 7-ounce (how quaint) sizes, the tobacco stays moist in its retro tin for weeks, making it possible for English blend smokers to incorporate into a rotation as an occasional aromatic adventure a blend that generates the same level of satisfaction as a nonaromatic. The aromatic flavoring did not permeate my English-only briars—another plus.

HARB: This blend is described as elegant and captivating. Pop the top off the tin and you will find a pleasant aroma that is tangy and sweet, but the identity of the fragrance may be elusive. To me, it hints of chocolate and caramel, with a tangy topping I could not identify. The tobaccos in the blend range in color from light to medium tan, brown and black and are presented as a Cavendish cut mixed with thin ribbons. The tobacco is moist but not goopy and was easy to pack evenly in the pipe. At the flame, the smoke had a zing and sweetness and was smooth and pleasant with a tingle on the palate that suggests a Burley component that adds a medium level of body. The flavorings do not mask the tobacco flavor, and by mid-bowl they begin to dissipate. There is a caramel-like room note that lingers. Distinguished Gentleman is a very pleasant blend that burns cool and leaves a mottled gray ash and dry dottle. Lovers of aromatic blends that do not bite may find the description on the tin to be true.

Accountant's Mixture: Rattray

GAGE: Judging by the silky, light fruit in the smoke and even the tin aroma of aged Virginia with a peppering of wood smoke from the Latakia, I might assume this had been cellaring a few years. As an out-of-the-tin product, it shows remarkable age and complexity. The predominantly medium-fine ribbon cut hints at the condimental use of black Cavendish and Latakia but mostly showcases mahogany strips of well-aged Virginia.

The mixture packs and lights well but smokes a bit wet. It performed

much better after a few days of open-air drying, delivering hints of clove and toasted nuts. The Virginia flavors are deep and rich—nothing zesty or tangy in this blend. The Latakia is noticeable but discreet, so do not expect a powerhouse. The Cavendish adds some noticeable sweetness and becomes slightly more dominant in the final few puffs. As originally described by Rattray, the mixture is "invaluable for outdoor smoking." While hearty enough for outdoors, its room aroma is modest and dissipates quickly, so it can deliver Latakia flavor with relative discretion. Great to smoke right out of the starting gate, this should be even more complex after a couple years' cellaring.

HARB: The description on the tin for this blend is only "A Full Tobacco." The composition is black Cavendish, Virginia and Latakia tobaccos, and the blend is a mixed cut of thin, light tan ribbons and various-sized chunks of dark brown and black tobacco. The aroma is tart, fruity and sweet, with faint leathery, smoky tones of Latakia. Once stoked to a smooth burn, the smoke that emerges is a symphony of flavors from all the components in good harmony without one or the other dominating. By mid-bowl, the sweet tones of the Cavendish and the mellow tones of the Virginia give way to the Latakia, raising the flavor level past medium but not to full. This is a 'just sit back and enjoy it' blend that does not need a serious degree of contemplation that may draw your attention from the work you are doing.

Red Rapparee: Rattray

GAGE: One of Rattray's original Scottish mixtures, Red Rapparee served as a middle ground for several other Rattray Scottish blends, one bolder (Black Mallory), and some milder (7 Reserve, 3 Noggins, Professional). The fruity tin aroma of this classic, lightly brindled mixture promises what it delivers—a medium-strength blend with a condimental use of Latakia and black Cavendish serving as a backdrop for aged Virginia and Oriental leaf. ▶



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Rattray's Booklet on Tobacco Blending

A DISQUISITION FOR THE CONNOISSEUR.



Before the advent of tobacco all these pipes were of various shapes, but the highest quality of the tobacco pipe was only reached when tobacco merchants introduced pipes of the human figure. (See also page 10.)

Page 10

A comforting and modestly complex smoke, it delivers dry and earthy flavors. The Oriental leaf, which is dry rather than sweet, is reminiscent of Burley. Charles Rattray chose an interesting name, as the Rapparees were a group of Irish brigands—he diplomatically called them “vagabonds”—who roamed the countryside in the 1600s and enforced their own brand of discipline, which included robbery. This formulation may have been as bold as a Rapparee in its day, but it pales in comparison with many of the robust blends now available. Still, there is a place for a well-balanced, mild smoke with considerable character.

HARB: Another English/Oriental blend from Rattray's, Red Rapparee is lightly seasoned with Oriental tobaccos in a base of red Virginias and Cavendish. The aroma is sweet, with a light, pungent smokiness that suggests a light touch of Latakia. The composition is mostly medium tan, thin ribbons, with the balance made up of chunks of darker tobaccos. At the charring light, the smoke is sweet, tart and spicy. There is a hint of the deeper character of Latakia present. Once stoked, the Orientals and Cavendish blossom, yielding a medium flavor profile, complexity and body. The blend burns smooth, but caution with the smoking rhythm will keep the smoke cool and avoid bite. Red Rapparee is a good, spicy blend for a change of pace from the English blends laden with Latakia.

Black Mallory: Rattray

GAGE: Black Mallory, which is somewhat heartier than Red Rapparee, delivers appealing depth and complexity in a balanced mixture of dark Cavendish, Virginia, Oriental leaf and Virginias. The black Cavendish definitely comes through, but in such an appealing way that even the most diehard English blend smoker would not object. There is little discernable sweetness from the Virginias but loads of depth and age.

This medium ribbon contains more Latakia and Cavendish than Red Rapparee but is no Latakia bomb. As with many of the Rattray Scottish mixtures, Black Mallory offers an opportunity to enjoy a quality medium English-style smoke spiked with excellent black Cavendish.

HARB: Black Mallory is one of a series of four blends in this group that share the same components of Black Cavendish, Virginias, Orientals and Latakia. The others are Highland Targe, Professional Mixture and 7 Reserve. The proportions of each component are reformulated in the series to feature the individual tobaccos. With Black Mallory, Rattray's has upped the amount of smoky Latakia and added some of the varieties of the Oriental tobaccos that are more piquant and spicy. The result is a sweet and earthy blend with more definitive leathery overtones of Latakia in the aroma and greater depth of flavor and complexity in the smoke. The blend is still well balanced to allow the special characters of each component to come through in the smoke. Overall, Black Mallory is a stout blend with robust flavor and spiciness, and sweetness and body. It smokes cool and dry and leaves a soft gray ash. It is a definite selection for the to-try list or for your rotation.

Professional Mixture: Rattray

GAGE: As described in the catalog, this was blended to be "lightly seasoned with Orientals to suit many customers who only desire a suggestion of Eastern tobaccos." Professional was originally the least expensive of the Rattray Scottish line because it employed a lower percentage of the costly Oriental tobaccos. I found it to be pleasant and modestly interesting, with buttered toast and nut flavors. The black Cavendish, which is excellent in all the blends, really shone in Professional. The Latakia stood humbly in the background. Professional offers enough character for a light alternative in an English rotation, and a very approachable option for aromatic or Virginia smokers wanting an English blend with a creamy aromatic nature and a modest dose of Latakia.

HARB: This is another of the blends in the series for this group that share the same components. It is similar in appearance to Highland Targe, but the proportions of the tan and brown ribbons are noticeably greater than the darker Cavendish and Latakia tobaccos. There is more of the smokiness of Latakia and less of the pungency of

the Orientals in the aroma. In the pipe, however, it was the spiciness of the Orientals and the sweet fruitiness of the Cavendish that contributed more to the flavor, with the Cavendish adding more body to the blend. As I progressed down the bowl, the Orientals blossomed, increasing the flavor from a light to a medium level, so that the flavors of the Virginias and Latakia stayed in the background through the remainder of the smoke.

7 Reserve: Rattray

GAGE: As Black Mallory is the heartier sibling of Red Rapparee, this was blended as a lighter, less challenging version. As the booklet described: "The constituents are of the same quality and grade as Red Rapparee, with this difference, that the proportions have been adjusted to meet the requirements of the constant, and not the intermittent, smoker." But how many of us have the time or opportunity to be all-day smokers?

A slightly dusty tin aroma carried a hint of Latakia. While the mixture smoked like an all-day smoothie, there was no particular interest from the

Orientals or Virginia and little Latakia or Cavendish contribution. Comparing the mixture with 40-year-old 7 Reserve tins in my cellar confirmed the new Oriental leaf is not able to deliver the same sweetness and complexity, and this mixture leans heavily on its Oriental component. While effective in the other Rattray mixtures, the Orientals and Virginias were too bland to make this an interesting selection.

HARB: The final blend in the series for this group, 7 Reserve shares the same components of Latakia, Virginias, Orientals and Cavendish. The composition is, perhaps, 65 percent of the light tan and medium brown ribbon-cut tobaccos and 35 percent of the darker brown and black tobaccos. The aroma has more of the smokiness of Latakia than the others do in the series. At the first light, the spiciness of the Orientals was noticeable, with smokiness from the Latakia emerging during the charring light. The extra pungency of medium to full-flavored Oriental varieties developed during the first half of the bowl, growing in intensity as the underlying tobaccos were seasoned by

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Rattray's Red Rapparee

(Piquant)

As its name implies, Red Rapparee is the mixture for the Bohemian, or the vagabond, in modern literary parlance. Exhilarating and elusive, quaint and seductive, Red Rapparee is a symphony of delicate odours and sweet contemplative reverie. It exhales the tranquility and delight which are forever associated with the true vagabond. Among the tobaccos it is the star.

Prepared from choice Red Virginia and heavily flavoured with Orientals, Rattray's Red Rapparee has a beautiful red tinge; it is small and short and dry; it burns in the pipe with the spontaneity of a fine cigar. The ash is dull grey, and the walls and bowl of the pipe remain clean and dry. It is of no use whatever to those who merely puff.

Page 12

Rattray's Black Mallory

(Piquant)



This mixture, of the full strength of Red Rapparee, is dark in appearance; and suggests something quite different from what it is. Its fullness of body and flavour constitute its compelling charm. While it looks heavy, it pleases the eye, surprises the palate, and tastes fragrant and sweet.

It exhilarates, fortifies and satisfies.

Red Rapparee and Black Mallory.

9/2 per 1 lb. tin. 18/4 per 1 lb. tin. 24/6 per lb.

Prices paid on 20th October 1911. (See also 1 lb. tin of 20th October 1911.)
Black Mallory on 1 lb. tin and 1 lb. tin, 24/6.

Page 13

the smoke. By mid-bowl the Orientals and Latakia developed a good interplay and complexity, with the Virginias and Cavendish adding a light sweetness. I found this an enjoyable blend that had both an Oriental and English character that was compelling. This one easily makes my rotation.

Highland Targe: Rattray

GAGE: Yet another variation on the Scottish mixture theme, this mixture delivers a light tin aroma of campfire smoke, leather and apples. Like all the Rattray's tobaccos, the medium-fine ribbon has nearly perfect moisture content and burns perfectly. The mixture is dominated by a lightly sweet tang of aged Virginia leaf, smoothed by Orientals and Latakia. Neither of these tobaccos is particularly prominent.

The black Cavendish, however, is surprisingly forward in this blend because the Oriental and Latakia tobaccos are so docile. I picked up appealing flavors of apple pie and seasoning like clove, nutmeg and allspice, contributing to its general interest and modest complexity. This blend is appealing to predominantly English mixture smokers in the mood for something skewing toward the aromatic side of the scale. Like Professional Mixture, this would be especially appealing to someone who favors light aromatic blends and is looking for a non-cased mixture reminiscent of an aromatic. It is a great candidate for anyone seeking a short smoke or small bowl, getting up to speed quickly and providing a flavorful experience.

HARB: This is the second blend in the series for this group that shares the same components. The composition is close to 50 percent light to medium tan ribbons and 50 percent dark brown/black Cavendish cut tobaccos. The aroma is light and sweet, with a light fruity note and a faint smokiness of Latakia. Once stoked through the charring light, the Cavendish sweetens the smoke, and the Orientals add a light to medium spiciness without the piquancy of the more flavorful varieties. The Virginias are well-balanced with the Cavendish, and the Latakia is well-balanced with the Orientals in this masterfully formulated blend. Both the Virginias and Latakia are in the

background, seasoning the flavor profile but not contributing much of their taste characteristics. The blend can be coaxied to bite if you try to get more flavor than it delivers. Just smoke it evenly and slowly, and enjoy the flavors that are there.

Marlin Flake: Rattray

GAGE: Similar in profile to Reiner Long Golden Flake, which is another superb Virginia flake produced in long, cake-pressed strips, Marlin Flake's tin aroma is like whiffing a glass of prune juice. These luscious, fat strips of dark aged and flue-cured Virginia are flecked with black Cavendish and Perique. While Long Golden contains more light Virginias and is lightly cased (not to its detriment), Marlin is considerably darker and not cased, and that may make a difference to some. The dense flakes benefited from a day of drying.

Keeping the accolades to a minimum, this is an outstanding offering. The minimal addition of black Cavendish makes this relatively unique among Virginia-Perique flakes. As good as it is out of the tin, this should develop with two or more years of cellaring.

HARB: This is a straight red Virginia blend that is presented in long, partially broken flakes. After tearing them into short strands, the flakes were easy to rub out. The flake form can retain moisture, so I allowed the ribbons to dry before loading them in a pipe. The composition is mostly medium to dark brown tobaccos. At first light, the smoke was zesty and sweet, with hints of plum and chocolate. After the charring light, the blend smoked smooth and burned slow with a medium flavor level. I preferred Marlin Flake in a larger, deep bowl so that the smoke could season the underlying tobacco as I progressed down the bowl. By mid-bowl, the flavors developed a deep richness, the sweetness continued to develop, and the flavor level became increasingly more intense. This is a comfortable blend that features well-processed, aged and matured Virginia tobaccos and deserves a place on your to-try list. I welcome it as another Virginia blend for my rotation.

Hal O' The Wynd: Rattray's

GAGE: This chunky ribbon-cut broken flake was described as "all-Virginian" in the old Rattray catalog.

Old-time tobacco descriptions were often less than forthcoming, so it is entirely possible the use of accent tobaccos was not mentioned. Today's mixture incorporates Burley and Perique, which make a subtle contribution. I detected a bit of Perique-like twang and Burley earthiness that really reminded me of Escudo (even though Escudo does not contain Burley) and, ironically, a bit like the departed Burley-based Edgeworth. If you miss that blend, you might find this a satisfying replacement. The tin aroma delivers notes of currant and chocolate.

Hal O' The Wynd is a sweet and cool-smoking mixture, but it's also fruity and quite tangy. It was almost impossible to overheat, even with vigorous puffing. While the leaf is clearly well-aged, it still seemed a bit youthful, with some grassy overtones and a slightly sour finish. While this was not unappealing, a couple years' cellaring should address some of the vegetal flavors and take this tobacco to an even higher level.

HARB: One of the aged Virginia blends in Rattray's lineup, Hal O' the Wynd is



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Rattray's 7 Reserve

(Registered)

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8/2 per $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. tin. 16/4 per $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. tin. 32/8 per lb.

Weights add up all Orders of not less than $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. or of 500 cobs.
Post postage on $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. tin and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. tin, 8d.

Page 16



Rattray's 3 Noggins

(Registered)

All our mixtures have had their genesis in the seeking of a smoker for something to suit his particular palate. 3 Noggins, our latest mixture, has been no exception. A tobacco with all the fragrant properties of 7 Reserve, but a little more full in body was what a customer sought, and in time 3 Noggins was evolved.

Its inherent goodness has rapidly earned for it a remarkable popularity and, peculiarly enough, has not diminished but advanced the sale of its companion mixture, our world wide known 7 Reserve.

8/2 per $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. tin. 16/4 per $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. tin. 32/8 per lb.

Weights add up all Orders of not less than $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. or of 500 cobs.
Post postage on $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. tin and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. tin, 8d.

Page 15

described as a broken flake of matured Virginias. The composition is mostly medium tan, red and brown ribbons that are thin. The aroma is sweet, with a hint of fruit and hay. Once stoked, the flavor is sharp, perky and robust, with plenty of depth and an underlying, light sweetness and fruitiness. Easy to provoke to overheat because of the thin cut, I preferred this blend in a small bowl and with a slow, soft draw. For those who do not think Virginia blends have much flavor, Hal O' the Wynd will deliver the unexpected, because there is really a lot of flavor in the blend.

G.L. Pease New World Collection: JackKnife Plug

GAGE: This dense, cake-pressed old-style plug of aged and bright Virginias and dark-fired Burley begs to be played with, offering options to slice, rub out or chunk. It has a pronounced tin aroma of smoked, slow-cooked barbecue pork. The pieces of leaf in the cake are quite large and ragged, with quite a few thick stems. While stems can be bitter, they were clearly an intentional part of the cake.

The leaves are layered, so slicing the cake is the only way to obtain the

intended combination. Tearing results in a ragged mess. I suggest preparing your plug and returning it to the tin while it is pliable. Like all plugs and twists, it will be almost impossible to work with if it dries out. Once sliced, it can be cubed or shredded into strands. The tobacco presented flavors of forest loam, black pepper, turbinado sugar and smoked meat. It consistently started with a more pronounced dark-fired Burley flavor, and the Virginias developed sweetness and played a more prominent role in the final 75 percent of the smoke.

That said, it was difficult to keep lit due to its density and moisture content. I cut slices and cubes from the moist plug and gave them several days of open-air drying. The dried slices and cut cubes yielded a "stiffened" product that was much easier to work with and keep lit, yet it did not turn to powder despite vigorous rubbing out. I detected no difference in flavor between the moist and dry versions. Like many heavily pressed, dark plugs, it is strong and packs a powerful nicotine punch that was problematic for me. But if you can handle the nicotine, this manly blend can transport you to an era of

sailing ships, railroad travel and horse-drawn carriages.

HARB: Composed of dark-fired Kentucky and red Virginia that is layered on a core of bright Virginia, JackKnife Plug is then pressed and matured in cakes, and finally cut into blocks. The blocks can be along the layers for thin or thick ribbons, or cut on the ends for small or large cubes. I prefer ribbon cut, so I sliced off medium-thick slabs and rubbed them out. The plug form holds moisture, so I let the ribbons dry before packing. The aroma is mild, slightly sweet and fruity from the Virginias, and rich with the deep notes of the Kentucky. Once stoked through the charring light, the blend settles into a smooth smoke, with the Kentucky providing a rich depth of flavor and body. The blend is well-balanced so the Virginias add a smooth, mellow sweetness that complements the blend very nicely. Overall, this is an enjoyable blend that delivers a bold flavor level with nice interplay between the tobaccos. It is cool burning with body and complexity, and it will surely develop a good following. P&T



Pipe of the Year 2011

by Jeff Gracik

A classic shape with Danish influences and Gracik's style, these pipes are precise instruments of tobacco enhancement. Unfortunately, we have only 30 of them. We begged Gracik to make more, but his exacting construction parameters limited the number possible, so we're lucky to have these.

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Magnum contrast blast: \$795
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(These magnums are 7.5 inches long, 2.5 inches high, 0.93-inch tobacco chamber, 2.2 inches deep)





Chicagoland International Pipe & Tobacciana Show

The Chicagoland International Pipe & Tobacciana Show will be held May 5-6, 2012, at the Pheasant Run Resort, 4051 East Main St., St. Charles, IL 60174. Reservation telephone numbers are 800.999.3319 or 630.584.6300. Mention the show and receive a special room rate. For more information, contact Craig Cobine at porshcigar@aol.com; or visit the show's website at www.chicagopipeshow.com.

CORPS Pipe Show

The 27th Annual CORPS (Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers) Pipe Smokers' Celebration and Exposition will be held Friday, Oct. 7, through Sunday, Oct. 9, 2011, at the Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa at Short Pump. Room reservation information will be available soon. For more information or to reserve a table, contact CORPS at P.O. Box 2463, Chesterfield, VA 23832; phone: 804.342.0761; email: conclave@corppipesmokers.org; website: www.corppipesmokers.org.

Kansas City pipe show

The 2011 Greater Kansas City Pipe & Tobacco Show will be held June 25-26 at the KCI Expo Center. Featuring the American Carvers 7-Day Set Competition, Slow Smoke Contest and Grand Raffle, the show will include a banquet with a guest speaker and lots of pipes, tobaccos and accessories for sale. For more information, visit the Kansas City Pipe Club's website at www.gkcpipeclub.com or contact Quinton Wells at 816.223.9506.

NASPC Show

The annual North American Society of Pipe Collectors Show will be held on Saturday, Aug. 27, 2011, at the Ramada Hotel, 4900 Sinclair Road, Columbus, OH 43229. Phone the hotel at 877.609.6086 and mention the NASPC Show to receive a special room rate. For show information, contact Bill Unger at NASPC, P.O. Box 9642, Columbus, OH 43209; phone: 614.436.3751; email: bill@naspc.org.

West Coast Pipe Show

The second annual West Coast Pipe Show will be held Nov. 5-6, 2011, at the Palace Station Hotel & Casino. Smoking will be allowed in the entire show area, including in the new smoking lounge incorporated into the ballroom. There will also be a Friday night poker tournament hosted by the show committee. For West Coast Pipe Show room rates, contact the Palace Station Hotel & Casino at 800.634.3101; website: www.palacestation.com. For table reservations and other information, contact Steve O'Neill at 956 East 800 South, Lewiston, UT 84320; phone: 435.258.5431; email: steve@westcoastpipeshow.com; website: www.westcoastpipeshow.com.

AD INDEX

4noggins.com	35	Fader's	34	Quality Briar	49
Al Pascia	34	Greentree Tobacco Co.	35	Savinelli	7
Arango Cigar Co.	11	Iwan Ries	34	Smokingpipes.com	3
Bisgaard Pipes	35	James Norman Limited	CV2-1	SpecComm Int'l	9, 33, 53
Cigar & Tabac Ltd.	34	Just for Him	35	Stemco-Pimo	47
CORPS	8	Ming Kahuna	54	The Briar & The Burley	35
Cup O'Joos	CVR4	Monjuz International	5	The Briary Pipe & Tobacco Co.	34
Daughters & Ryan	CVR3	Music City Marketing	6		
De La Concha	46	Park Lane	35		
East-West Trading Co.	51	Pulvers Briar	34		

PARTING SHOTS



Pipe by Takeo Arita • Photo by Nell Archer Roan

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